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and Future** p. 68

**Efteling's Monumental
Track Toward
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Funworld

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2024

Finding Light in Adversity

Liseberg's great resilience
in the wake of Oceana's
devastating fire





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Finding Light in Adversity

Liseberg's great resilience in the wake of Oceana's devastating fire

ON THE COVER: Liseberg Commercial Coordinator Pontus Hallsberg and NCC Team Leader Jonathan Hallén lead Funworld on a tour of the fire-torn Oceana on June 17.

COVER PHOTO: SCOTT FAIS

LISEBERG

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The French park's CEO reflects on 35 years of Gaulish magic

COMPAGNIE DES ALPES



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2024



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AQUARABA

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NEW 2024 - MINE TRAIN
ENERGYLANDIA, POLAND



NEW 2025 - INDOOR FAMILY LAUNCH COASTER
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RAPIDS WATER PARK

Rope Drop

Colorful Mayhem

Rapids Waterpark in West Palm Beach, Florida, debuted Mega Mayhem in March 2024. Operator Premier Parks surveyed park guests and conducted market research before selecting ProSlide to design one of the longest water coasters in North America. Todd Andrus, senior director of marketing, tells Funworld that marketable attractions need a slogan or superlative. Gain more insight on p. 99. Plus, scan the QR code to watch an IAAPA News video report recorded at the park.



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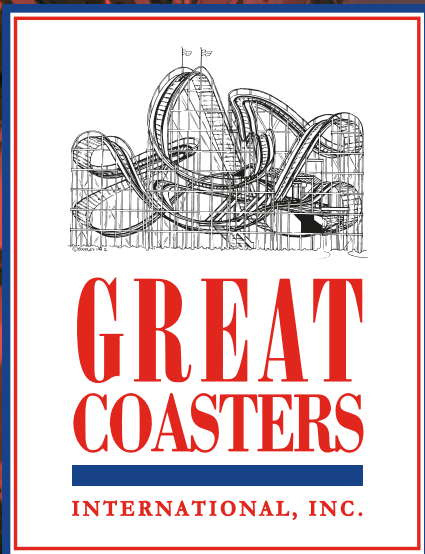
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Launch



EUROPA-PARK

Europa-Park's Welcome Center 75 is a short walk from the park's on-site employee housing complex.

EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

Europa-Park Centers on Employees

Two new facilities promote social engagement and holistic health

by Arthur Levine

PRIORITIZING THE NEEDS OF ITS EMPLOYEES, Mack Group—the company that owns and operates Europa-Park—recently introduced two separate initiatives to help distinguish itself amid a highly challenging and competitive labor market. The new Welcome Center 75 and Feel Good health center represent innovative, proactive efforts to attract and retain the park's seasonal workforce of more than 5,000 employees. As a family-operated company, the Mack's collaborated to create the two world-class facilities that provide multiple benefits.

A Center for All

First, the new Welcome Center 75 (named for the year the park opened) is located a short walk from Europa-Park's on-site employee housing complex. Managing Partner Jürgen Mack and Frederik Mack, director of human resources and management representative for finance and controlling, saw a need to centralize its human resource services. New employees now visit the facility to complete the onboarding process, which includes processing paperwork, receiving employee uniforms, and learning about the company's benefits and culture. Previously, new employees had to visit several buildings to →

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Welcome Center 75 is open to Europa-Park employees and residents of Rust, Germany.

complete the check-in process.

Moving forward, tour guides based out of Welcome Center 75 will show new employees where they will be working, as well as other relevant locations within the resort and the town of Rust.

Europa-Park aims to make the center a welcoming environment for established employees as well, allowing all to make use of the building's amenities. Rust government representatives regularly visit the center to help answer questions and provide services, saving employees a trip into town. An onsite cafe—which is not only open to employees, but also park guests and members of the Rust community—offers an informal gathering spot. Europa-Park hosts social events at the center as well.

“People from different departments can get in discussions and make friends. They can get in contact with people from the village,” says Frederik. He notes that employees represent more than 100 nationalities, so to accommodate, Welcome Center 75 staff members speak 11 languages.


Fostering Belonging and Social Wellness

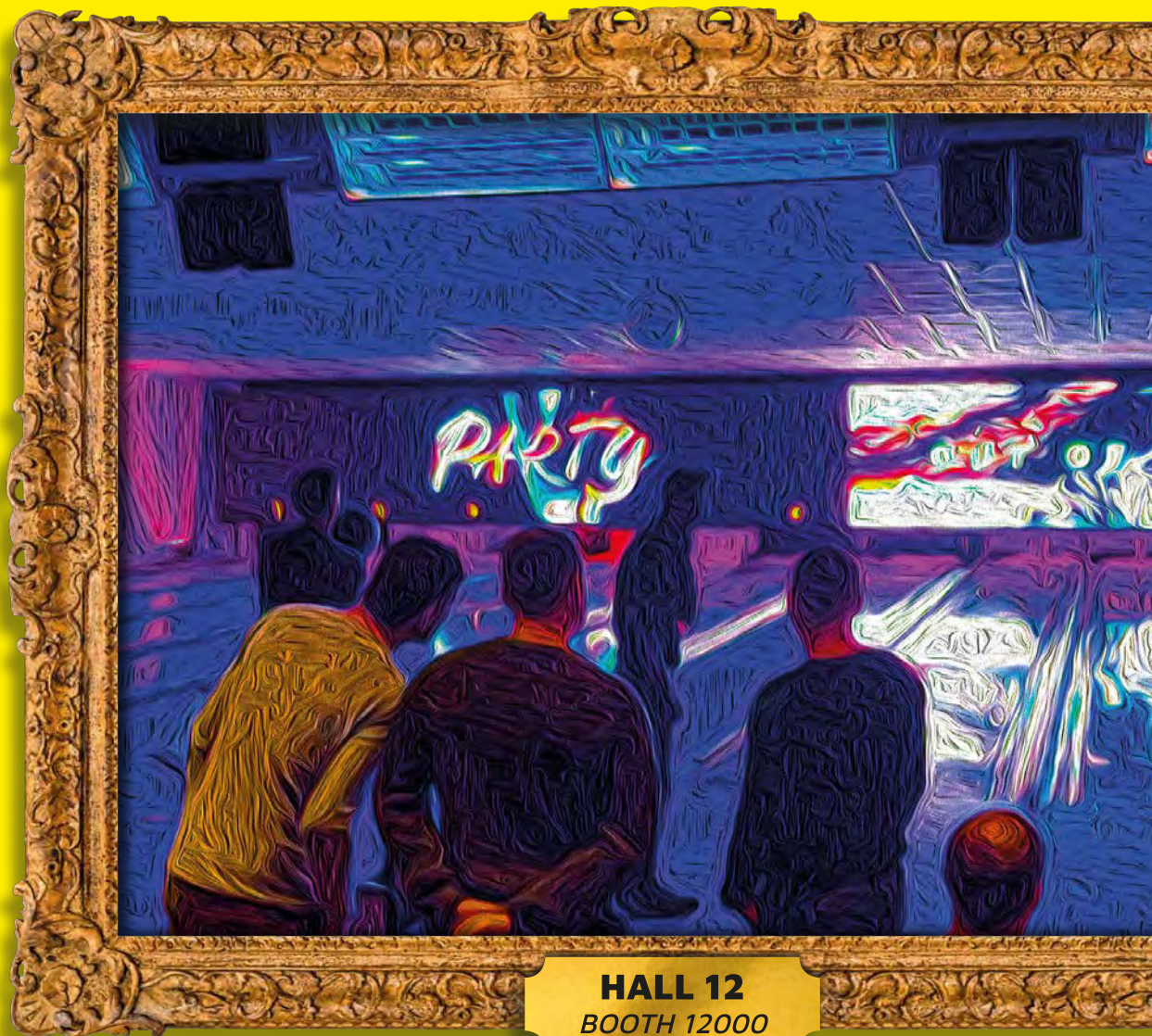
Miriam Mack, wife of Europa-Park managing partner Michael Mack, launched a program five years ago to promote health and provide medical care to employees. The new Feel Good center brings these services under one roof and expands the

offerings. While Miriam says that it is often difficult to book medical appointments in Germany, the center provides employees direct and easy access to general practitioners, dermatologists, physical therapists, orthopedists, and other specialists. There are plans to offer telemedicine appointments and wellness programs, such as nutritional counseling, yoga classes, and routine checkups to prioritize health maintenance as well.

“It’s not only about examinations. It’s about having good food, having good relationships with one another, taking care of mental health issues. This is a whole 360-degree program,” Miriam tells Funworld.

While the Feel Good center is an attractive benefit for employees and candidates who are considering working at Europa-Park, it is more than a recruitment and retention tool. The center helps keep employees healthy and happy, according to Miriam. With its focus on prevention, the center can help reduce downtime, thereby making it a win-win for the resort and its staff.

Both new facilities are part of a larger goal, Frederik adds. Each structure helps employees feel welcomed and valued members of the Europa-Park team. “The most important thing is that our employees are happy, because only then can they be good hosts for our guests. Basically, happy employees mean happy guests,” he says. 



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1

GUEST COMMUNICATION

FRONT AND CENTER WITH SAFETY

Carowinds released a series of proactive social media posts, blog entries, and videos promoting safety at the theme park straddling the North Carolina and South Carolina border. The guest-facing content transparently shares Carowinds' commitment to safety. Topics include ride manufacturers, annual licensing by state agencies, daily mechanical inspections, unexpected ride stoppages, and the use of drones in inspections.

"Using the drones gives us a way to do more inspections," explains **Steve Jackson**, director of maintenance and construction at Carowinds in a video. "We have our own drone now, so we can fly our own sorties. It gives us the ability to do it now versus having to call somebody in—a contractor—to do the work for us."

To see examples of Carowinds safety content, visit IAAPA.org/Carowinds



CAROWINDS

2

NEW AND NOTABLE

LIGHTNING STRIKES

China's **Dinosaur Dream Factory** became home to **Zamperla's** third Lightning coaster this summer. The roller coaster begins with a vertical lift powered by a chain drive, followed by four inversions that include a vertical loop, zero-G roll, a dive loop, and a classic corkscrew. At 2,260.5 feet long, Zamperla says the new coaster is their largest built to date in China.

ZAMPERLA

BEST IN ANIMAL CARE

Zoológico Guadalajara in Mexico recently opened the **Comprehensive Center for Animal Medicine and Welfare** (named CIMBA in Spanish), one of the largest veterinary hospitals within a zoo in Latin America. Guests may tour the pharmacy, the clinical laboratory, the surgery room, a diagnostic imaging area, and treatment areas. All of the components work together to ensure the zoo's animals receive the best possible care.



CIMBA

SNOWY COASTING

The Alpine Coaster at **Thredbo Alpine Resort** in Thredbo, New South Wales, Australia is a creation of **Wiegand**. With guests controlling their own speed up to a maximum of 40 km per hour, the new attraction traverses 1.5 km of track through a tunnel, over bridges, and down the snowy alpine panorama. The resort, known for skiing and snowboarding, built the attraction to operate 365 days a year.



THREDBO

3

INNOVATION

FORE YOURSELF **FEC**

AR's Entertainment Hub in San Antonio implemented an automatic way to distribute golf balls for its indoor miniature golf course that requires no staffing. Co-Owner **Archie Wright** tells Funworld, "We were spending all this payroll for just someone to handout a golf ball."

The solution comes in the form of the Golf Ball

Vendor combined with a Club Rack from **DSM Sales & Manufacturing**. Guests at the FEC will swipe their game card and then the device dispenses one golf ball. "It's performing flawlessly," Wright says. "It saves payroll, it saves time, [it's] very easy to maintain."



SCOTT FAIS

4

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY
SPREADING **LIGHT**

PLOPSALAND

Summer provided a perfect backdrop for employees at **Plopsaland De Panne** in Belgium participating in Relay for Life, benefitting the Foundation Against Cancer. More than 25 teams consisting of 110 employees walked or jogged through the park for 24 hours without stopping. As the sun set, Plopsaland's pathways became aglow with luminaries lining the course. "By organizing this famous event—for the first time ever at an attraction park—our themed scenery created an unforgettable memory for all participants," says **Kris Biesemans**, who assisted in organizing the event. The employees at Plopsaland De Panne raised more than €62,000 during the event.

5

BRANDING

PARK IN **PRINT**

Seaside attraction **Harbour Park** in Littlehampton, England, is the setting for a new children's book featuring the park's mascot, **Sandy Castle**. Author **Wenny Smart** pens a tale where twins on holiday create and then befriend a magic sandcastle that can walk and talk through their adventure, building respect for the planet we all share. "Sandcastle building is a simple, free activity that connects people with nature. Additionally, I wanted to promote environmental awareness, especially regarding our coasts and oceans," says Smart, who grew up as a self-described island girl from Java Island, Indonesia. Entitled "Sandy Castle," the book "brings a lot of goodwill and is instantaneously recognizable" as part of Harbour Park's brand, says mascot creator **Gary Smart**, Wenny's father-in-law. The book is available from WH Smith, Waterstones, and Amazon.com.



HARBOUR PARK

**HAVE A DISPATCH FROM THE FIELD?**

Have a Dispatch from the field? Share your 2024 successes, wins, and innovations with Funworld. Send news and photos to FunworldWorks@IAAPA.org



WONDERLAND SCIENCE FICTION EXPLORATION HALL

Deep Space Adventure Launches in Beijing

Visitors to Beijing's ZGC Science Fiction Industry Innovation Center can enjoy two new deep space sci-fi adventures. Guests don an astronaut suit and helmet in Space Rescue, then pilot a capsule to a space station where they must restart a control system at a biological base. Space Dinosaur Base combines two popular themes while testing players' intellect and bravery.

The visuals of both experiences are powered by Christie Pandoras Box and Widget Designer. Christie Pandoras Box facilitates the transition of gaming scene effects while

integrating multi-scene audio and video content with Widget Designer's adaptable control algorithms. The software is installed in two customized multimedia servers.

"This setup allows for precise control of storyline effects and efficient network distribution," says Daiyuan Wang, general manager of Beijing De Yi Jia Chuang, which installed the software. "This empowers the operator to achieve real-time and precise playback control of various audio and video content."

metaversecenter.cn

Spherical SkyOrbs Soar Over Singapore

Visitors to Singapore's Sentosa Island and nearby Mount Faber can witness spectacular views 100 meters above the ground from the Singapore Cable Car's new SkyOrb cabins. Billed as one of the world's first chrome-finished spherical cable cars, the SkyOrb features glass floors, enhanced ventilation, and colorful lighted rings that cast an illuminating glow in the evening.

"The spherical design of the SkyOrb Cabins breaks the boundaries of traditional cable car aesthetics and offers a futuristic and captivating



look," says Buhdy Bok, managing director of the Mount Faber Leisure Group (MFLG), which has added seven SkyOrb cabins to its cable car fleet.

The SkyOrb is designed in collaboration with Switzerland's CWA, a member of the Doppelmayr Group. CWA first partnered with MFLG for the launch of the first-generation of Singapore cable cars more than 50 years ago.

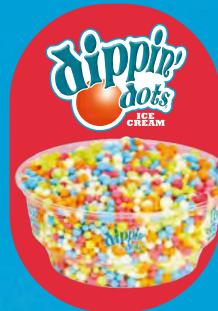
A round-trip cable car ticket costs SG\$35; an upgrade to ride in a SkyOrb cabin is an additional SG\$15.

mountfaberleisure.com/attraction/singapore-cable-car

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PAULTONS PARK

Paultons Park Embarks on New Adventures in the U.K.

Playful dinosaurs took over Splash Lagoon, a new family water ride at Paultons Park in Hampshire, England. Lawrence Mancey, the park's marketing and technology director, describes Splash Lagoon as the "perfect addition" to Paultons' Lost Kingdom land.

Just like Paultons' popular Dinosaur Tour Co. Jeep Safari ride, Splash Lagoon offers families up-close encounters with prehistoric beasts. "The ride also allows younger children to enjoy a slightly larger log flume than they could previously,"

Mancey says.

Paultons Park's focus on theming and landscaping continues with the ABC Rides Mini Flume ride. In a lush tropical setting, guests will meet a Brachiosaurus and Triceratops, both supplied by Gengu. Dinosaur spotters should also keep their eyes on the watchtower, built by Paulton's engineering team. Visitors will encounter a downed airplane and a water tunnel before the big splash.

paultonspark.co.uk

Revamped Chocolate Workshop Offers a Treat in Germany

Chocoversum, the chocolate museum in Hamburg, Germany, continues to strengthen its brand as a must-visit destination for chocolate fans by giving its chocolate workshop a makeover.

Guest feedback inspired Chocoversum to transform the attraction, tapping into the trend for personalized and immersive experiences. Chocoversum's research showed that 58% of visitors wanted to create their own chocolate bars. Guests of all ages can now decorate liquid chocolate with ingredients to suit their tastes at a Create-Your-Own-Bar experience. Chocoversum also caters to broader tastes by including white chocolate alongside milk and dark chocolate options.



Anne Merle Stribeck, project manager and exhibition curator, adds, "There was a need to make the workshop more accessible and inclusive by adjusting table heights and labeling." Visitors can expect "a vibrant, stylish environment with bold colors, flowing shapes, and light accents."

"The redesigned workshop improves the guest experience by making it more interactive, enjoyable, and memorable," she says.

The new-look chocolate workshop opened in June. Chocoversum plans to continue guest-centered product development and evolve in other areas, including flexible pricing and retail, to enhance the business.

chocoversum.de

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AQUARABIA

Aquarabia to Make a Splash in Qiddiya City

Construction continues on Saudi Arabia's upcoming water theme park, Aquarabia. Located in Qiddiya, Aquarabia will complement Six Flags Qiddiya City, the first Six Flags park to be built from the ground up outside North America. Both parks are slated for completion in 2025.

Aquarabia will offer 22 rides and attractions in eight lands for guests to explore. These include Camel Rock, the family-friendly Dhub Grotto, Wave Wadi (with a giant wave pool), The Den—a private zone for women and children—and the Viper Canyon

thrill zone. There's also an adults-only Arabian Peak retreat and Herding Grounds, an adventurous water sports zone with white-water rafting, kayaking, canyoneering, free solo climbing, and cliff jumping. Surftopia features the Kingdom's first surf pool. The theme is inspired by the journey of local animals on their way to an oasis.

Qiddiya Investment Company Managing Director Abdullah Al-Dawood says as one of the region's largest water parks, Aquarabia "marks a significant milestone for Qiddiya City."

qiddiya.com

Miral Banks on Success with Emirates NBD Partnership

Miral, a creator of immersive destinations and experiences in Abu Dhabi, has announced a three-year strategic partnership with Emirates NBD, a banking group in the MENAT (Middle East, North Africa, and Türkiye) region. The partnership marks one of the largest sponsorship deal in Miral's history.

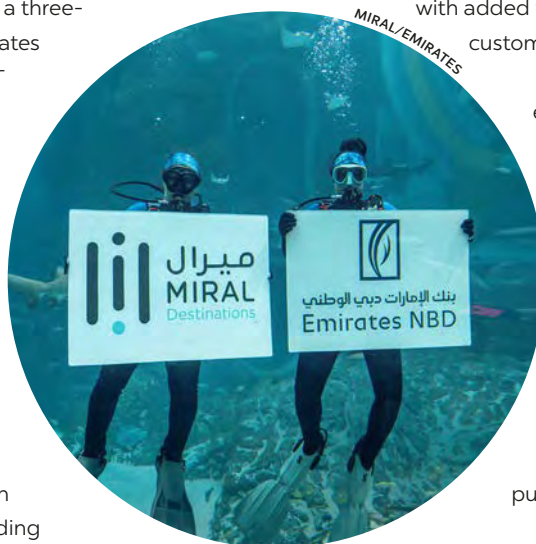
"As our official banking partner, Emirates NBD will play a crucial role in further enhancing the overall experience for our guests across our world-class attractions on Yas Island, Abu Dhabi," says Liam Findlay, CEO at Miral Destinations. This collaboration reinforces our commitment to providing

unparalleled leisure and entertainment offerings to our guests, with added value now provided for all Emirates NBD customers."

The deal gives Emirates NBD cardholders exclusive benefits and discounts across all Yas Island theme parks and CLYMB, an indoor skydiving attraction.

Emirates NBD is also present in the parks through FacePass, which streamlines the guest experience. The contactless technology, facilitated by the Yas Island app, uses facial recognition at its entry gates and serves as a cashless way for visitors to pay for purchases made at gift shops.

miral.ae





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CATEDRAL DE SAL DE ZIPAQUIRÁ

Monumental Museum Opens 180 Meters Underground in Colombia

Located 40 kilometers north of Bogotá, the city of Zipaquirá is no stranger to tourism. While the destination is known for its cobblestone streets and archeological sites, Zipaquirá rose to international fame thanks to its Salt Cathedral. The famed cathedral anchors a cultural complex with multiple attractions, adding a new museum to its roster.

Opened in May, the Museo Subterráneo Monumental 180 Metros takes guests on an underground journey to appreciate works commissioned by artists from different countries. The new gallery celebrates colossal sculptural art with 22 pieces on display, including 11 carved into the salt walls and 11 more sculpted from marble blocks.

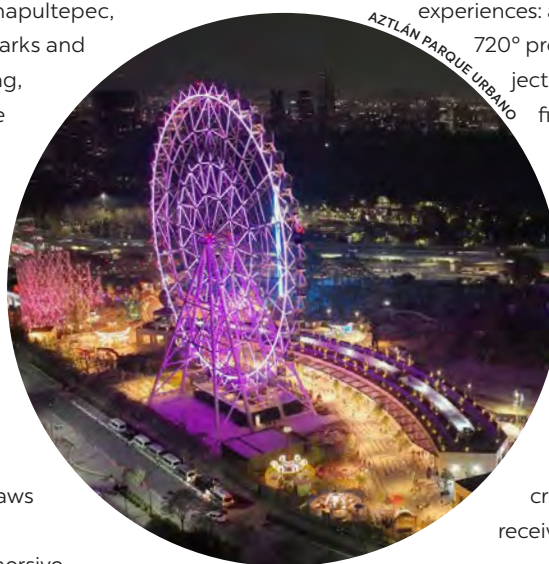
catedraldesal.gov.co

Aztlán Parque Urbano Arrives to Mexico City's Largest Urban Park

A new theme park is now open in Chapultepec, one of Mexico City's largest urban parks and green spaces. Inaugurated this spring, Aztlán Parque Urbano sits where the historic La Feria de Chapultepec once stood.

The new attraction and its mascots are inspired by traditional elements of Mexican folklore. New rides and midway games are part of the amusement park, whose Ferris wheel has become a city landmark. Designed by Fabbri with cabins that can accommodate four or six passengers, Aztlán 360 draws attention for its night lighting.

The new park is home to two immersive



experiences: a virtual reality haunted house, and a 720° projection experience—with media projected on the walls, floor, and ceiling. The film explores Mexican culture. In a second phase, Aztlán Parque Urbano is expected to add additional attractions and thrill rides, including a roller coaster, a flight motion simulator, and a 50-meter drop tower. Aztlán Parque Urbano is open to the public using a free-entry model. Admission to the rides and attractions can be purchased individually or in packages, with credits placed on the card that all visitors receive.

aztlanparqueurbano.com



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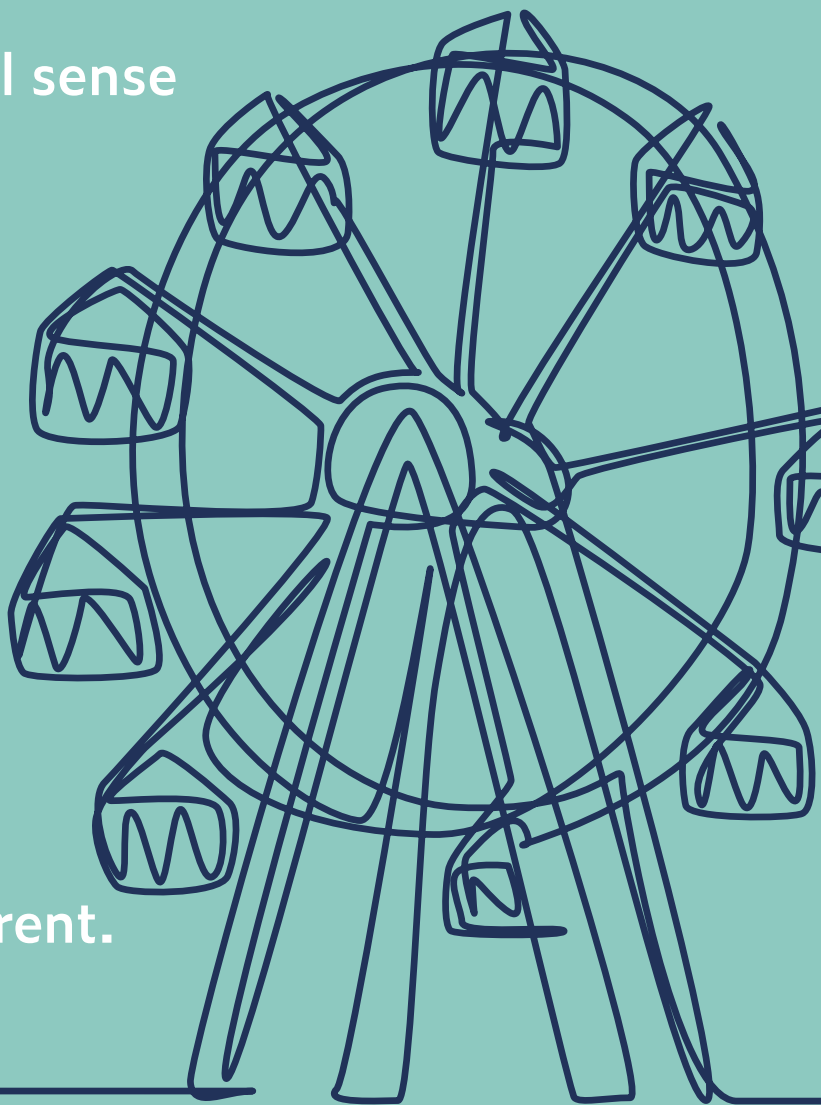
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WONGWAY STUDIO

Endless Surf Arrives in Fleurieu Peninsula

An under-development surf park in South Australia named The Break Surf & Stay is projected to be the first attraction in the Southern Hemisphere to use WhiteWater's pneumatic wave-generating technology. Designed to be similar to an ocean swell, Endless Surf waves are made using air and pressure within pneumatic chambers. Waves can rise to 2.1 meters, and lasting as long as 18 seconds.

"There is a significant market for health and wellness, active

and surf tourism that is largely untapped in South Australia, and we believe this transformational project will help to unlock that opportunity," says founding partner Richard Sheppard.

The Break Surf & Stay, located about 45 minutes south of Adelaide in a new AUS\$100 million tourism precinct, plans to attract 320,000 visitors per year. Construction of the 11,700-square-meter lagoon with beachside amenities is scheduled to begin next year, with the resort opening in 2026.

thebreak.com.au

Timezone and Zone Bowling Expand in Adelaide

Timezone and Zone Bowling combined forces to launch a mammoth dual-branded family entertainment center (FEC) in Adelaide's Westfield Tea Tree Plaza. The 2,700-square-meter facility is six times the size of its predecessor.

"The overwhelming success of the original Timezone Tea Tree Plaza venue has made it clear that the community of Adelaide demands fun, accessible experiences," says Kane Fong, general manager of Timezone and Zone Bowling Australia. "So, we're turning up

the entertainment dial to 11."

The new FEC features more than 110 arcade games, seven Spin Zone Bumper Cars, three party rooms, a 24-vest laser tag arena, and 12 bowling lanes. A cafe featuring burgers, nachos, doughnuts, and more on the menu will satisfy hungry visitors. Timezone advertises that the new Winners Vault redemption center is "packed to the rafters" with high-quality branded and unique prizes.

timezonegames.com/en-au/venues/sa/timezone-tea-tree-plaza



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JOEY CHASE

New Andretti Indoor Karting & Games Location in Arizona Features Unique Attraction

Andretti Indoor Karting & Games raced into Chandler, Arizona, earlier this year with a new facility. The 95,000-square-foot FEC features high-speed electric Superkarts on a multi-level track, a state-of-the-art arcade, virtual reality games, a two-story laser tag arena, bowling, and a 7D Xperience motion theater, plus a bar and full-service restaurant.

"We are especially excited about our new Chandler, Arizona,

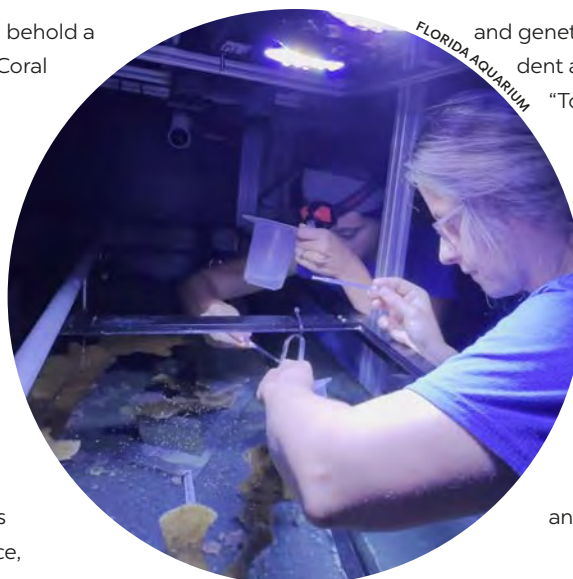
location as it is the first track we designed entirely in-house," says Samantha LaMagna, director of marketing for Andretti Indoor Karting & Games. Designers gained inspiration from respected racetracks across the globe. "Modeled after road course racing, it's been dubbed the 'Monaco of karting tracks.' We believe it will offer our fans a thrilling experience unlike any other in the market."

andrettikarting.com/chandler

Florida Aquarium Opens Center Devoted to Coral

Visitors to The Florida Aquarium can behold a 4,200-square-foot expansion of its Coral Conservation and Research Center. The facility in Apollo Beach, Florida, is dedicated to preserving, breeding, and rearing corals facing extinction. The expansion almost doubles the size of the former facility and provides additional space for the aquarium's existing coral greenhouses and spawning laboratories.

"One of the unique things we do at The Florida Aquarium's Coral Conservation and Research Center is we focus on coral resiliency, tolerance,



and genetics," explains Roger Germann, president and CEO of The Florida Aquarium.

"To expand our needed coral science, research and restoration efforts are critical now more than ever, and we're up for the charge. Millions of coral babies will be exported out of The Florida Aquarium."

Germann also says the new exhibit will bring hope for the future when restoring Florida's coral reefs. "The science and research that we are doing will truly have a positive impact on decades and generations to come," he says.

flaquarium.org



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AXESS

Snorkeling-Friendly Underwater Park Debuts in Sint Maarten

Sint Maarten is now home to an underwater sculpture park named Under SXM. The attraction pays tribute to local culture by showcasing the work of local artists while simultaneously generating habitats for marine species, as the sculptures create substrate for an artificial reef.

While this project is not the first underwater sculpture installation in the Caribbean, Under SXM regards its display, with over 300 pieces, as one of the largest in the world. The underwater attraction is designed to be enjoyed while snorkeling or scuba diving. Placed above the water are six oversized buoys that guests may hold on to, allowing them to rest without effort.

After opening the underwater park, Under SXM placed seven replicas of its sculptures on land in Sint Maarten so guests looking to stay dry could also experience part of the attraction. As part of a commitment to community development, future underwater sculpture additions will be carried out by newly trained local artists and creatives.

undersxm.com



UNDER SXM

Hope for White Rhinos in Zimbabwe's Hwange National Park

As keystone species, white rhinos are vital for the ecosystems they inhabit. However, by the turn of the century, they were brought to the brink of extinction. In acknowledgement of the risk posed to the species, Zimbabwe's Community Rhino Conservation Initiative (CRCI) continues to work tirelessly to ensure the species is protected across African nations.

Born as a model for community-based conservation, the project aims to provide socio-economic opportunities for locals, reduce conflicts between wildlife and people,



and rebuild viable populations of white rhinos predominantly on communal lands. By creating custodians of white rhinos, CRCI brings employment, education, and funds to communities surrounding Hwange National Park.

The first CRCI white rhino sanctuary was established in Ngamo, Zimbabwe, in 2022. Following its success, a second sanctuary in the country was established in Mlevu earlier this year. According to the master plan, more sanctuaries are on the way and will create a buffer zone between the park and the local communities.

hwangecommunityrhino.com

IAAPA Middle East and Africa Economic Impact Study

For the first time, IAAPA produced an Economic Impact Study for the Middle East and Africa regions. The study was conducted in 2023 and represents data for the 2022 calendar year.

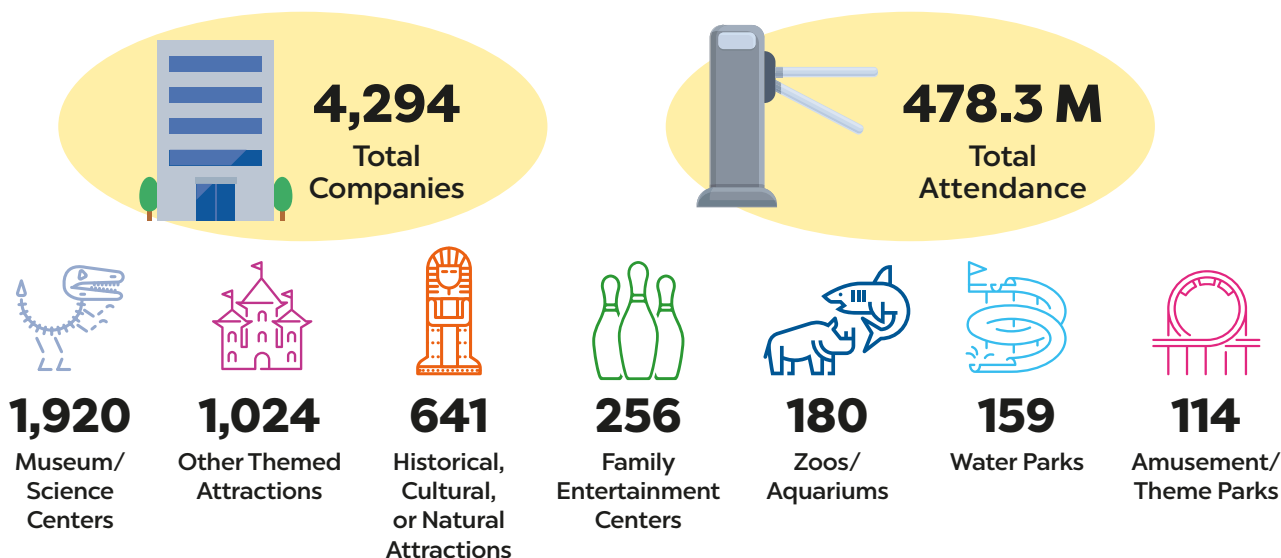
In 2022, museums and science centers accounted for the largest share of attractions (45%), followed by other themed attractions (24%), and historical, cultural, or natural attractions (15%) across the 15 countries that were included. Collectively, attractions welcomed 478.3 million visitors which generated

\$14.5 billion in direct revenue and supported more than 365,000 jobs. Including indirect and induced impacts associated with the attractions, the industry's overall revenue reached \$24.3 billion and supported more than 565,000 jobs.

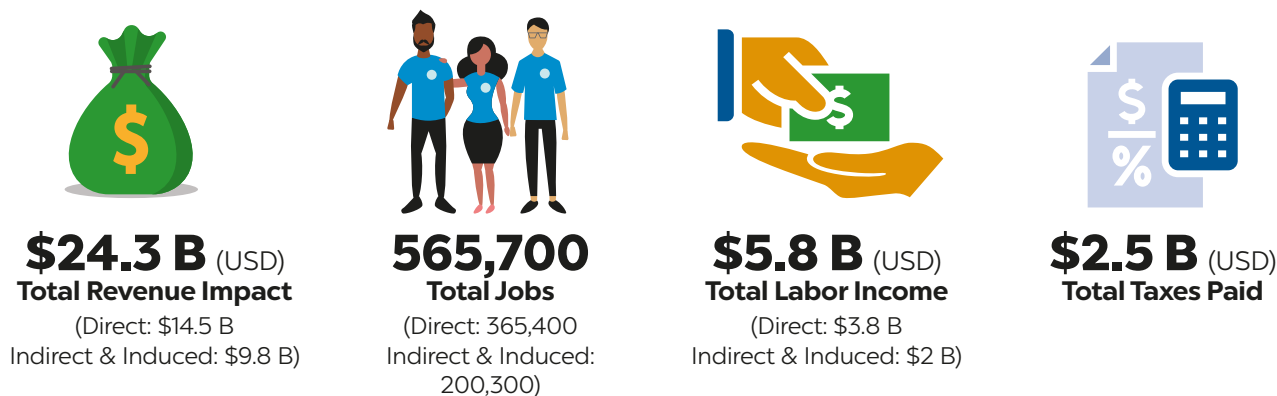
Find the full results of the 2023 Middle East and Africa Economic Impact Study in the IAAPA Bookstore.



Attractions Industry Snapshot in Middle East and Africa (2022 Calendar Year)



2022 Economic Impact in Middle East and Africa (Aggregate of 15 Countries in 2022)





At KidZania, children plant kale seedlings and learn about sustainable urban farming.

Relaunched KidZania Singapore Offers 21st Century Role Play

AT THE HEIGHT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC in 2020, Sim Leisure Group (SLG) issued an offer to purchase KidZania Singapore. The family entertainment center (FEC), which had previously been operated by a unit of Malaysia's sovereign wealth fund, Khazanah Nasional, was undergoing liquidation, and its immovable assets were on the auction block. Travel and health restrictions meant that it was impossible to visit the site. In a leap of faith—since travel and health restrictions prevented an on-site visit—Sim Choo Kheng submitted a bid, sight unseen. He offered SG\$110,000, thinking it was unlikely he would win.

However, Sim did win, and when he could finally tour the facilities, he was happily surprised by their condition. Sentosa Development Corporation (SDC), the landlord, had continued to air condition the facilities even after their closure, so the attractions remained in pristine shape.

Fast forward to 2024—after completing tenancy and franchise negotiations with SDC and the global KidZania office, KidZania Singapore reopened its doors. SLG estimates it spent more than SG\$3 million on updates and refurbishments and should recoup its investment within six months of operation.

"I've always admired the KidZania brand and wanted to own one but could never afford to spend SG\$48 million," Sim says, citing the sum that Khazanah and Boustead Holdings reportedly injected into the project in 2016.

The Sim Leisure Group—which operates Escape theme parks and Haven XR virtual reality centers, in addition to designing and building attractions for others—now has the rights to two KidZania franchises. In a separate deal with the Khazanah-Boustead joint venture, Rakan Riang directly acquired the

KidZania franchise in Kuala Lumpur. It reopened in 2021.

KidZania Singapore is one of the largest KidZania locations in the world. The facility spans 7,600 square meters across two levels on Sentosa Island in a purpose-built facility, where an airplane's cockpit emerges from an exterior wall, jutting out over the front entrance.

Like other franchisees, KidZania Singapore offers children the opportunity to role play as firefighters, pilots, doctors, dentists, fashion models, and police officers. However, there are several 21st century offerings as well.

In a room sponsored by Sustenir, children plant a kale seedling and learn about sustainable urban farming, an issue that is particularly relevant for Singapore since the country imports most of its food. At the AirTumTec anti-microbial lab, child scientists swipe the walls for specimens, then look under the microscope for bacteria and germs. In a mental health-themed attraction named the Feelings Factory, children become psychologists or clients exploring what makes them happy, angry, and sad. Opportunities abound to learn about solar-powered electric vehicles, game coding, robotics, and more.

The FEC believes 200,000 adults and children are expected to visit KidZania Singapore during the first year, and SLG projects this number to double within five years. While sponsorship is traditionally an important revenue stream at KidZania franchises globally, SLG expects ticket sales to account for the bulk of the franchise's income. Tickets are listed at S\$120, but admission can be discounted up to 50% with dynamic pricing models.

"We're here to stay," he adds. "We know how to run the business. We eat, we breathe, we dream, we talk leisure. That's our business." **FW**

kidzania.com.sg/

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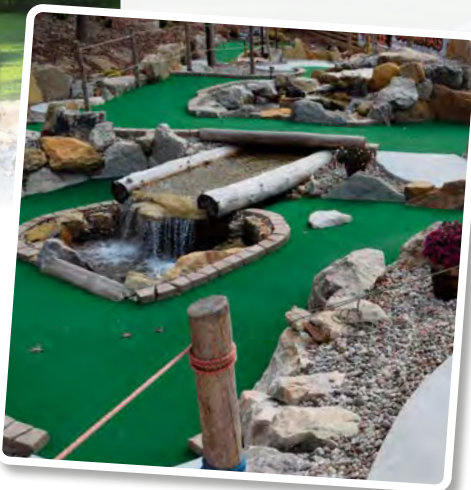
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TOVERLAND

Escaping the Norm

How Toverland developed a two-night escape experience within its gates

"CAN WE TURN THE WHOLE PARK into one big escape experience?" That bold question ignited the imagination of team members at Toverland during a creative planning session at the end of 2023.

"We all agreed. Why not?" recalls Henk Janssen, branding specialist at Toverland.

On April 12 and 13, the Toverland Escape Experience became a reality. The theme park in Sevenum, Netherlands, granted around 100 lucky prize winners the chance to explore the 20-hectare park at night, solving puzzles to "unlock the magic."

Toverland partnered with experienced escape room developers Epic Escape, the team behind the popular Illusion escape room in Waalwijk, Netherlands. Epic Escape came up with the initial storyline and puzzle ideas. Toverland's marketing, communications, entertainment, and attractions teams provided feedback to refine the concept. "We created a real-world story embedded in Toverland's magical DNA," Janssen says.

Drafting a Story

In the storyline, guests apply to join Toverland's security team. Events take an unexpected turn when they spot suspicious activity on the park surveillance system. The group heads into the dark, deserted theme park to investigate.

The experience combines puzzles for guests to solve with live entertainment, animatronics, actor encounters, and special effects. For example, to unlock a door near the Djengu River ride, players looked for clues on rafts passing beneath a bridge. Signs in the Ithaka area showed them how to decode Morse code signals from flame throwers at the Troy roller coaster entrance. Merlin the magician used his powers to help them escape.

Staffing the Magic

More than 50 "Toverlanders" rolled up their sleeves to participate in the lead-up to the event, and around 25 staff members worked the evening event. Toverland and Epic Escape collaborated on the programming and training, with Toverland's game hosts receiving special coaching. Toverland invited 10 groups, consisting of four to six people, per night to play, with a recommended age of 12 years or older. Guests played for around two hours (the event ran from 7:30 p.m. to 3 a.m.). The park hosted a preview night for press and influencers on April 10 to build buzz.

"We always want to be relevant and do our best to keep our guests talking about our brand," Janssen says. "Our strategy is always to have something going on."

Transforming an entire theme park into an escape room required time, energy, and personnel. "We would love to host another edition," Janssen says, but with new projects demanding their attention, Toverland's team is unsure if the experience will return. However, they are proud of the "mesmerizing" event and the guests' enthusiastic response. Around 5,500 teams, including many families and friends, applied to compete. "The Toverland Escape Experience was a way to distinguish ourselves and show that we dare to try new things," Janssen says. 

toverland.com



Go Inside Toverland

Gain insight on how Toverland grew its footprint and enhanced the guest experience as the park hosts an EDUTour on Friday, Sept. 27 as part of IAAPA Expo Europe. Learn more and register at IAAPA.org/Toverland



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NOAH'S ARK

A Culture of Safety

THE COMBINED PRODUCT of individual team members and park values, attitudes, perceptions, competencies, and patterns of behavior are what determine and influence the commitment to the value and impact of your overall safety program.

When you have been working in this industry for as long as I have, you have a very clear understanding of where safety sits within our industry. It is at the very heart of what we do every day. From the day of your recruitment, safety needs to become part of your attractions industry DNA.

When discussing safety culture, I always base and measure it against three simple principles: the right ownership, the right attitude, and the all-important commitment. Each principle contributes to your overall safety culture within an organization—no matter what type or size of visitor attraction you are.

For any organization, it is important to get the buy-in, and this must be from the top down. From the CEO to the operator on the platform, we all must work together to create a safety team.

To do this, it is crucial to empower and support all your team members by providing clear ownership of safety and the programs supporting it within your organization.

Safety Should Not Be About Enforcement, but Engagement

Involve your team when writing programs and procedures to give them a degree of ownership and to yield a higher level of engagement. Communication is a key element of any safety program by providing clear, unobstructed channels and removing barriers to reporting and program delivery.

To promote safety culture in our industry, we must consider our guests and how to communicate safety features to them in a way that will encourage positive behaviors. This is proving to be one of the greatest challenges facing our industry, wherever you operate in the world.

From my observations, understanding the perception of risk is lower today than previous years. From climbing neighbors' trees

to playing in a digital online environment have certainly changed.


Communication is the Key

To promote a positive change in guest behaviors, we must provide clear and concise messaging for participation in rides and attractions. This engagement needs to be promoted early, including the pre-visit stage.

For many years, we have relied on safety and instructional signage to deliver our safety message on or about the rides and attractions. However, we must question that in today's digital age, can we do it better? Is printed signage alone still effective? Is there a better method of engagement?

No matter whether you are an attraction park, water park, or a family entertainment center, it remains our job to provide fantastic, safe experiences and lasting memories for our guests. Doing this safely is paramount.

As industry creatives, it's also our job to continue to push the boundaries of entertainment to go higher and faster, often taking guests to the very edge and bringing them back safely—with a smile on their faces.

This is why as safety practitioners—and that's all of you reading this article—we must stay focused on our mission in promoting a strong safety culture across our industry. 



David Bromilow is director of parks and attractions at Mobaroo. An attractions safety professional with 46 years in the industry, he also serves on the IAAPA Safety Committee. Connect with him on [LinkedIn](#):





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Communications: What to Do When...

A PANEL OF INDUSTRY COMMUNICATIONS EXPERTS presented an EDUSession on communications at IAAPA Expo 2023. Attendees learned how to work with the press when the phone rings or a potentially charged email arrives with a tough question. Here are three suggestions of what to do when navigating challenging topics.

When ... the Media Misunderstands a Ride Stoppage

Any attraction with rides knows a ride stop will happen from time to time. “One of the challenges that we faced that’s benign to most of us who run the parks with roller coasters, is that there are normal stoppages, where the system says ‘Stop.’ At Cedar Point, I know we took a stronger stance on cellphone use on our rides,” explains Tony Clark, director of communications at Cedar Point.

Clark says Cedar Point’s action plan is to explain to every reporter or producer that this is normal and the ride’s safety is not compromised. “The easiest way to explain to a producer, anchor, or reporter why something like this happens (is say), ‘The check engine light came on. Do you continue driving your car? Do you just stop it? You continue driving your car! We don’t do that in our business. (When) the check engine light comes on, safety’s number one, everything stops until we can check it out.’”

When ... Local Media Wants to Localize a National Story

Leah Koch, director of communications, at Holiday World & Splashin’ Safari explained their park’s policy is a proactive one. “We definitely have always tried to prepare. When we do see some story developing like that, we’ll go ahead and prepare a statement, regardless of whether somebody is going to be calling us or not,” Koch explains. She says that while Holiday World has a statement ready regarding their park, they are careful about the message they are crafting, stating “You want to make sure that you’re not commenting on the actual situation.”


In addition, Koch adds she does not comment on the status of guests at her own park. She feels “people have a personal right to privacy.”



When ... a New Policy Causes Drama

In a constantly evolving and dynamic industry, policies frequently change—sometimes to the dismay of vocal guests, and thus, generates media coverage.

Jason Lasecki, vice president of corporate communications explains when Great Wolf Resorts went cashless, his team began stressing the guest convenience of doing away with cash. “We kind of dodged that bullet because nobody wants soggy dollar bills in their pocket at a water park,” he says. Greater convenience became the message communicated to guests, along with promoting the company’s tap-to-pay wristband that’s used for spending inside the water park.

In an attempt to avoid backlash, industry leaders will often reach out to each other for advice beforehand as a best practice. “I think, in this industry, it sometimes feels competitive. But this is where that value comes when you can talk to another park or talk to a colleague in a different business and say, ‘Hey, how did you guys go through this?’” Clark suggests. 



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The global trend you can't ignore.



New Leader of RWS Global's Sports Division

Kim Henshaw, the co-founder of **Great Big Events**, will lead **RWS Global's** new sports division following the acquisition of her company by RWS Global. Henshaw's experience producing major sporting events dates back to the 1994 Commonwealth Games. GBE's credits include FIFA World Cups, UEFA matches, and Olympic and Paralympic Games. As part of the deal, RWS Global is also acquiring GBE's suite of fan engagement apps and its PV4 software system. RWS Global is also establishing a fourth global hub in Sydney to complement its existing offices in New York, London, and Cincinnati.



Kim Henshaw

RWS GLOBAL

and 4,800 franchises in its portfolio. "Jeff brings with him vast experience within the hospitality industry managing large-scale systems where franchisees invest significant capital to open their businesses," says Michael Browning Jr., the CEO of Urban Air's parent company, Unleashed Brands. "He's a great fit to help scale Urban Air." Urban Air is one of the largest indoor park operators in the world, with 20 attractions that include laser tag, electric go-karts, and indoor skydiving.



Jeff Palla

URBAN AIR

Urban Air Adventure Parks Taps New President

Jeff Palla is taking the helm at **Urban Air Adventure Park**. Palla has over a quarter-century of franchise expertise, most recently as president of Mr. Handyman International, which has 29 brands

New Chairman at Singapore Mandai Park Holdings

Piyush Gupta—who leads Southeast Asia's largest bank, the **DBS Group**—is the new chairman of Singapore's **Mandai Park Holdings**. He replaces the acting chair **Chong Siak Ching**, who is the chief executive of National Gallery Singapore. Chong will continue to serve as the Mandai Group's



Piyush Gupta

MANDAI WILDLIFE RESERVE

IN MEMORIAM

by Avery Matteo

Laura Domet

It is with deep sadness that IAAPA shares the passing of a beloved team member, **Laura Domet**. Laura began her journey with IAAPA as a professional development intern, where she supported global professional development initiatives, coordinated education partner webcasts, and assisted with IAAPA's awards program. In February 2023, she obtained a full-time role as a global professional development coordinator. Laura was known for her infectious sense of humor, kindness, and positive attitude throughout the association, and she made a lasting impact on all who knew her. IAAPA shares its condolences with her mother, Sheri, her father, Mark, and her boyfriend, Phil.



Laura Domet

IAAPA

Talley Green

Talley Green, a prominent figure in the attractions industry, passed away peacefully at her home on June 27. As the manager of public relations and advertising at Lake Winnepesaukah, Green played a pivotal role in the park's enduring success, ensuring the facility remained a cherished destination for families and thrill-seekers. Known for her subtle wit, bright smile, and dedication, Green's influence extended beyond business, touching the lives of countless guests and employees. Her efforts in booking renowned country music acts and her hands-on approach in daily operations exemplified her commitment to the park's legacy. Green's contributions and



Talley Green

TENNYSON DICKINSON

warm presence will be fondly remembered, leaving a lasting impact on the Lake Winnie community and beyond.

Richard Jackson

Richard Jackson, a distinguished leader in the attractions industry, passed away on August 1. As past vice president of North American Operations for IAAPA, he was instrumental in opening the Orlando office in 2014 and paving the way for the association's relocation from Alexandria, Virginia, in 2016. Jackson's career also included leadership roles at Visit Florida, Universal Orlando, and the Florida Attractions Association. Known for his unwavering commitment to creativity and excellence, Jackson's legacy is evident by the accolades bestowed upon him. "Richard had a heart of gold. He openly shared his knowledge and resources for the success of all involved. His kindness, tireless work ethic, outgoing personality, warm smile, and generosity with his time and friendship were qualities that made Richard so special to all of us who had the privilege to work with him," says Hal McEvoy, immediate past president of IAAPA.



Richard Jackson

DISNEY

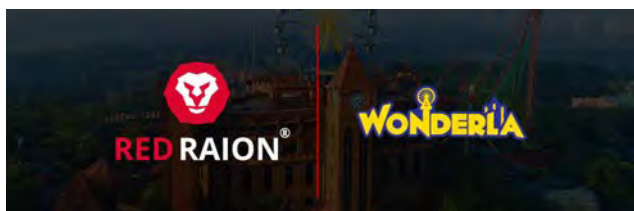
Bernd Kaufmann

The attractions industry mourns the loss of **Bernd Kaufmann**, CEO and owner of **Simtec**, who passed away on July 7. Kaufmann's visionary leadership propelled Simtec to the forefront of motion simulation technology, with innovative solutions in flight and driving simulation systems, and more

deputy chairman. Singapore's former Minister of Foreign Affairs, S. Dhanabalan, also remains on the board as the group's emeritus chairman. Mandai Park Holdings is the holding company of Mandai Wildlife Group, which operates four parks and is set to open a hotel and a fifth attraction called Rainforest Wild.

Red Raion and Wonderla Establish Partnership

Red Raion, a CGI studio, is teaming up with India's **Wonderla** to revamp the park's content and create new adventures based on the park's intellectual property. The first immersive experience to be updated is the Adventures of Chikku, a 3D film with additional



sensory effects. "At Wonderla, we're always aiming to enhance our guests' experiences," says Holidays Managing Director Arun K. Chittilapilly. Wonderla operates amusement parks in Bangalore, Kochi, and Hyderabad, India.

Alan Mahony Announced as New COO of Hainan Keystone

Alan Mahony returns to China as the chief operations officer for entertainment of **Hainan Keystone Properties Development**. Keystone is expanding into the attractions industry and is currently designing a Hello Kitty destination resort. Mahony is responsible for leading design and development; establishing revenue, sales, and marketing strategies; and recruitment and operational readiness. Previously, Mahony was executive director for attractions at Saudi Entertainment Ventures and the vice president for marine and waterpark operations at Atlantis Sanya.



ALAN MAHONY

than 20 flying theater installations worldwide. His efforts to prepare Simtec for his retirement, including a strong management team, have ensured the company's resilience and continuity. Andreas Stickel will now assume the role of managing director, carrying forward Kaufmann's legacy of excellence.

Jack Lazarus

Jack Lazarus, a beloved figure in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, and a pioneer in the amusement industry, passed away June 15 at age 87, leaving a legacy of innovation. In 1976, Lazarus and his wife, Bonnie, moved to Myrtle Beach, where they opened the Myrtle Beach Grand Prix. Over four decades, he operated multiple amusement parks, including Wild Water and Wheels and Myrtle Beach Waves. Lazarus was also committed to the broader attractions industry, serving on the IAAPA Board of Directors and IAAPA's Executive Finance Committee. Jack is survived by Bonnie, his two sons, and the many visitors who enjoyed his attractions.



SIMTEC



LAZARUS FAMILY

Jack Morey

Jack Morey, a second-generation leader in the attractions industry who served as executive vice president and chief creative officer of Morey's Piers, passed away on July 19. Alongside his brother Will, Morey played a pivotal role in not only establishing Morey's Piers as a premier family destination in Wildwood, New Jersey, but also in expanding the family business to

include three amusement piers, five restaurants, two water parks, four hotels, and two golf courses. Morey's dedication also extended beyond his business; he served as chair of the IAAPA Hall of Fame and Archives Committee, on the board of the Greater Wildwoods Tourism Improvement and Development Authority, and was a strong supporter of Give Kids The World Village (GKTW) and the IAAPA/GKTW fundraising golf tournament hosted annually during IAAPA Expo, among other volunteer endeavors. Morey's vast influence on community planning, preservation, and the attractions industry will be remembered fondly.



MOREY'S PIERS

William Sullivan

William "Sully" Sullivan, a Disney Legend whose illustrious 38-year career with The Walt Disney Company spanned both California and Florida parks, passed away on July 16 at the age of 88. Sullivan began his journey with Disney in 1955 as a ticket-taker at Disneyland's Jungle Cruise and rose to oversee operations at Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom. His pivotal roles included contributing to the Winter Olympics in 1960, the 1964-65 New York World's Fair, and the grand openings of both Epcot and Disneyland Paris. Sullivan's dedication to Disney's legacy is commemorated by two windows on Main Street, U.S.A., at Magic Kingdom Park. He will continue to be celebrated for his deep connection with Walt Disney and his efforts to instill Disney heritage in cast members and guests worldwide.



DISNEY

ADIRONDACK STUDIOS



Theming for Improv Theater

Orlando's **SAK Comedy Lab**, an improvisational comedy theater, recently moved to a new 7,200-square-foot location with the venue's new lobby, box office and bar areas designed by **Adirondack Studios (ADKS)**. The themed work consists of a cityscape aesthetic with Orlando's skyline outlined in a backlit silhouette above the bar and the lobby themed to downtown building facades. "The project gave us yet another opportunity to showcase our skills in design, scenic paint, fabrication, onsite art direction, and installation," says Wesley Craig, ADKS Project Manager. ADKS Art Director, Tony Shortway, notes working with the SAK Comedy Lab was similar to the routines they're known for on stage. "The SAK team's improvisational flair made for a truly collaborative, dynamic and fun design process from start to finish," says Shortway.

adkstudios.com

FANPORT



New Scalable VR Attraction

Technology development studios, **Draw & Code** and **302 Interactive**, collaborated to launch **FanPort**, a first-of-its-kind attraction that combines the deep immersion of VR with the accessibility and social connection of an open space. Scalable to a wide array of venues outside of a traditional theme park setting, Fanport utilizes mixed reality glasses, dynamic lighting, and spatial audio in a customizable system that provides the infrastructure for extended reality experiences, allowing audiences to interact with 3D scenes while seeing the real world around them. "As the first development partner of Fanport, we're excited about the unlimited potential this technology has for immersive experiences not just at large theme parks but in every form of entertainment venue from museums to sports stadiums," says Kyle Morrand, CEO of 302 Interactive.

drawandcode.com, 302interactive.com


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From Cardboard Box to Corner Office: The Family History Behind Seabreeze

"MY OFFICE USED TO BE IN A CARDBOARD BOX that the ring toss prizes came in," says Genevieve Norris-Brown, general manager of Seabreeze amusement park in Rochester, New York, describing the makeshift amusement park headquarters she imagined she ran as a young child. A sixth-generation member of one of the longest-running family ownerships in the attractions industry, Norris-Brown always knew that she wanted to embrace her heritage and carry on the tradition.

The story dates back to 1876 when the Long-Norris family began manufacturing carousels in Philadelphia and operating them as concessionaires at parks, including Bushkill Park in Pennsylvania, Blackpool in England, and Seabreeze, which opened in 1879 and is one of the oldest continuously operating trolley parks in the United States. The family brought its first ride, a Long carousel, to Seabreeze in 1906. In 1937, Norris-Brown's great-grandfather took over management of the park and purchased control of it from the railway company in 1946.

Her father, Seabreeze President Rob Norris, grew up in a family compound behind the circa-1920 Jack Rabbit coaster. He remembers being too small to catch the brass ring on the carousel and, before he was a teenager, picking up trash and operating games.

As with many traditional amusement parks, the 1970s were challenging times for Seabreeze. After college, Norris, his siblings, and cousin took over operations during the difficult era.

"We wanted to bring some more modern thought to the park. And we did it," he says. Norris notes that switching to a pay-one-price model and introducing water park attractions helped turn things around. "It really changed the nature of who came to the park, and we saw that young families were our niche. We



SEABREEZE AMUSEMENT PARK



said that we're not going to have the tallest or fastest rides, but we're going to have the nicest, cleanest, and friendliest place."

Three years ago, Norris-Brown assumed the day-to-day operations from her 74-year-old father, literally switching offices with him. It is now time for her and her two cousins, Alex and Jack, to assume the

family's mantle.

"It's a privilege and an honor," Norris-Brown says. "And it's a little bit of pressure. I think (Seabreeze is) greater than our family at this point. The park has been here so long that we now consider ourselves caretakers to make sure the legacy continues."

Both father and daughter say that IAAPA continues to remain an invaluable resource. The two have been actively involved with the organization and have held leadership roles. Norris served as IAAPA Chairman in 2006.

As for the future, Seabreeze seems to be in great, if tiny, hands. Norris-Brown's 4-year-old daughter, Madelyn, is enchanted by the park and loves coming to work with her mom and grandfather so that she can enjoy the rides and interact with the staff.

"She thinks she owns my whole office," Norris-Brown says of the exuberant seventh-generation family member.

Maybe they can get her a box. **FW**

ABOVE: A child enjoys a ride on Seabreeze's popular carousel.

LEFT: Rob Norris and Genevieve Norris-Brown in front of the Jack Rabbit roller coaster.

A lifelong attractions fanatic, **Arthur Levine** first started writing newspaper and magazine travel features about the industry he loves in 1992. He produces his own Substack newsletter, "Arthur's About Theme Parks" at AboutThemeParks.fun

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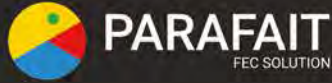


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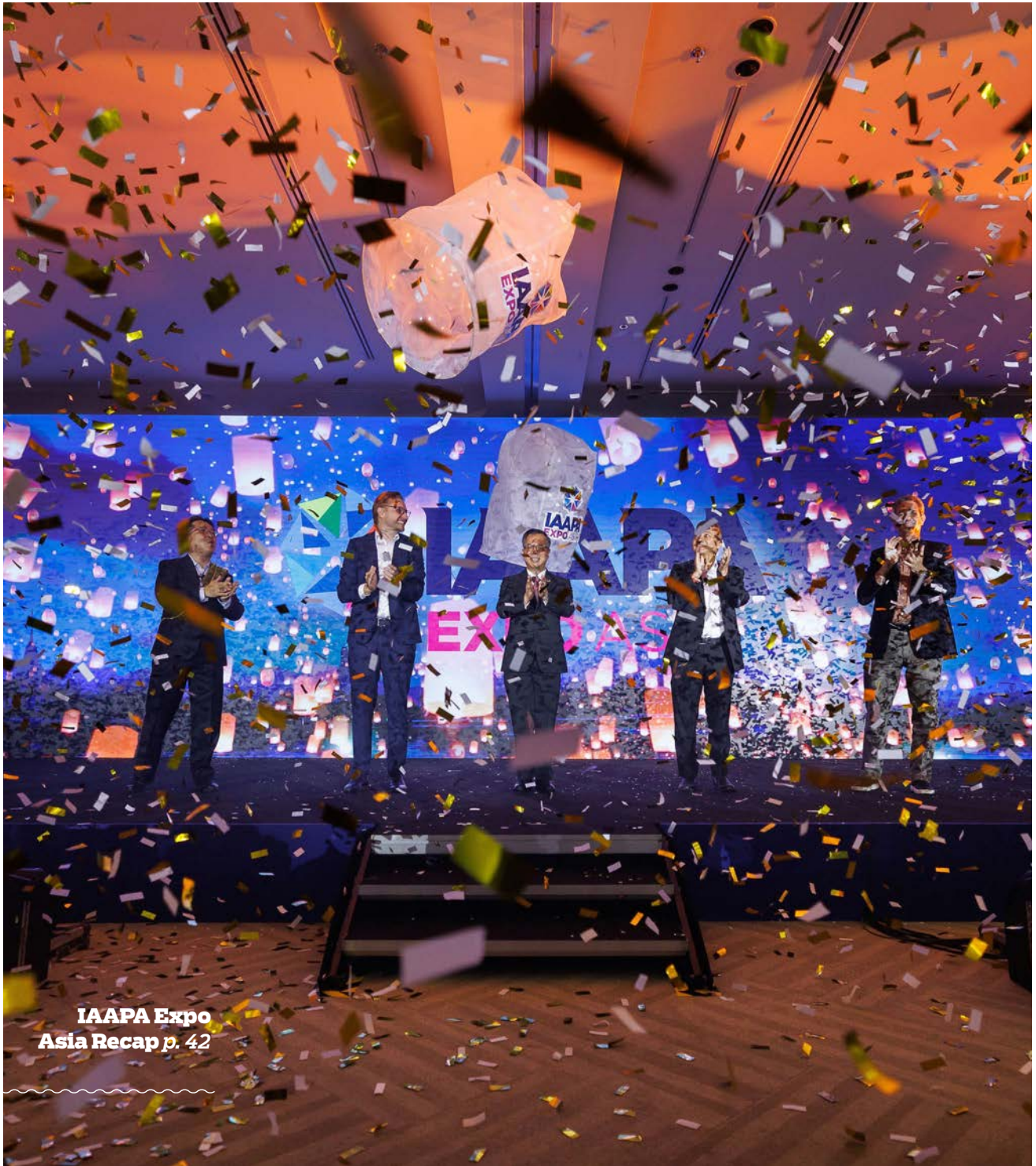
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IAAPA Expo
Asia Recap p. 42


THOMAS TAY

IAAPA Expo Asia Provides Solid Performance



IN JUNE, IAAPA EXPO ASIA RETURNED TO THAILAND for the first time in 17 years. The event held at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center in Bangkok welcomed 4,623 verified attendees, fostering valuable networking opportunities and insightful discussions among industry leaders. Discovering the latest trends, innovative products, and services will be remembered as highlights.

“IAAPA Expo Asia 2024 delivered a solid and respectable show,” says Jakob Wahl, president and CEO. “We were pleased to see our community come together in person to exchange ideas and showcase the future of the attractions industry.”

Jack Chan, executive director and vice president for IAAPA Asia and Pacific, adds, “Bangkok served as a fantastic host city, providing a fitting backdrop for this event. The support of our members, partners, and exhibitors has been essential to the success of IAAPA Expo Asia 2024, and we appreciate their dedication to our industry.” 

Stay tuned for more details on next year's IAAPA Expo Asia taking place from June 30 - July 3, 2025, in Shanghai, China.

ASIA EXPO BY THE NUMBERS

-  **4,623**
Verified Attendees
-  **3,187**
Qualified Buyers
-  **2,480**
Companies Represented
-  **352**
Exhibiting Companies
-  **70**
Countries Represented
-  **60**
Speakers
-  **18**
EDUSessions
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Mark your calendar:
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Expo Asia will take
place **July 1-3, 2025,**
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IAAPA Explores: Sustainability Delivers Unparalleled Insights and Access



AVERY MATTEO

THE IAAPA EXPLORES: SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM, held July 9-13, offered an insightful exploration of sustainable practices across a series of renowned attractions in France. The event kicked off on Tuesday, July 9, at Disneyland Paris, where attendees were welcomed with a networking lunch at the Disney Village Steakhouse. The program's commencement took place at the Hotel New York Convention Center, featuring an engaging presentation on Disneyland Paris' environmental strategy by Environment and Land Development Director Damien Audric.

Participants were then treated to a backstage tour of Disneyland Paris' sustainably operated facilities, showcasing the park's wastewater treatment plant and solar panels installed atop the guest parking lot. The day concluded with a dinner at Pym Kitchen in the Walt Disney Studios park, followed by an evening transfer to Villages Nature Paris—an eco-resort powered by geothermal energy and known for its comprehensive recycling and biodiversity programs.

Wednesday began at Villages Nature Paris with a group breakfast, followed by a site tour. Highlights included visits to Aquamundo Water Park, an on-site geothermal plant that has prevented

7,400 tons of CO2 emissions annually since 2017; an outdoor children's play area named Forest of Legend; the Promenade du Lac village center; and an exploratory botanical garden dubbed the Extraordinary Gardens. After the tour, Olivier Garaïalde, CEO of Center Parcs Europe, presented on Center Parcs' sustainable objectives and development plans. A networking lunch at on-site restaurant Délices de la Ferme preceded the transfer to Futuroscope, where attendees enjoyed dinner and the park's evening show, La Clé des Songes, before concluding the night at Hôtel Ecolodgee Futuroscope.

Thursday featured presentations and tours at Futuroscope, including the park's first themed hotel, Station Cosmos. Attendees learned about the park's progress toward their goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2025 through energy efficiency, waste reduction, and beyond while touring various corporate social responsibility (CSR) sites. Attendees were also provided exclusive access to the new Aquascope water park days before its July 15 opening, providing participants unfettered access to the site and staff members integral to the project. Following lunch, attendees departed to Puy du Fou, where participants checked in, dined, and experienced the iconic Les Noces de Feu evening show.

Friday's itinerary included breakfast, show experiences, and a networking lunch. Puy du Fou CSR and Project Manager Emmanuel Soulard delivered a sustainability presentation, followed by a sustainability tour and additional show experiences. The day concluded with dinner and the volunteer-run evening spectacular, Cinéscénie.

The program wrapped up on Saturday with breakfast and departures, leaving attendees enriched with knowledge and inspiration for advancing sustainability within their own attractions, companies, and organizations. **FW**

IAAPA Explores offers deep dives into topics relevant to the global attractions industry. To explore upcoming tour offerings, visit IAAPA.org/Explores



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IAAPA Presents: Cedar Point Connects Professionals

LIKE IT HAS FOR 155 YEARS, the sandy shore of Lake Erie welcomed visitors to Cedar Point on July 25 for a summer day like no other. Professionals in the attractions industry gathered for IAAPA Presents: Cedar Point, to gain valuable insights from industry leaders. Carrie Boldman, Cedar Point's current and first female vice president and general manager welcomed attendees, sharing her personal mantra of "make people happy," and regaled how she turned a summer job into a career in the attractions industry stretching to Florida, Germany, and Shanghai (among others), before returning home to Cedar Point in northcentral Ohio.

Before Boldman's welcome, a handful of attendees rode the funicular 223 feet to the top of B&M's dive machine roller coaster, Valravn. Wearing safety harnesses, each learned more about ride operations and maintenance from members of Cedar Point's Park Operations team while walking around the top of the lift hill. In exchange for the special opportunity, each participant made a donation to The IAAPA Foundation that will support life-changing career opportunities in the global attractions industry.

"Bringing our members together to experience such an iconic park left everyone energized and inspired. Cedar Point delighted us with behind-the-scenes tours and provided a great blueprint on how to exceed guest expectations for over 150 years," shares Vice President and Executive Director of IAAPA North America, Michael Shelton.

Another highlight included an exclusive tour of Zamperla's Top Thrill 2, the new 420-foot-tall triple launch strata-coaster. Members of the construction team provided insights into the ride conversion, construction process, engineering overview, and the



magnetic launch system.

During lunch at the Lakeside Pavilion, attendees enjoyed a traditional summer barbecue and had the opportunity to connect with other professionals in the industry. Following lunch, leaders on the park's creative services team guided a walk-through of the Eerie Estate haunted house and shared more about Cedar Point's fall event, HalloWeekends.

The event also included sessions on food and beverage (F&B) at the Grand Pavilion Restaurant and Bar—a 2024 IAAPA Brass Ring Award winner—where attendees had the chance to tour the new facility and its kitchen that debuted in 2023. Cedar Point's F&B team shared insight to the facility's multi-use design, the recent transformation of the park's F&B program to offer greater variety, and the commitment to scratch-made menu items. Additionally, there was a session on merchandise at the Point Plaza gift shop, where attendees learned about the park's evolution in product quality and partnerships with external retail vendors.

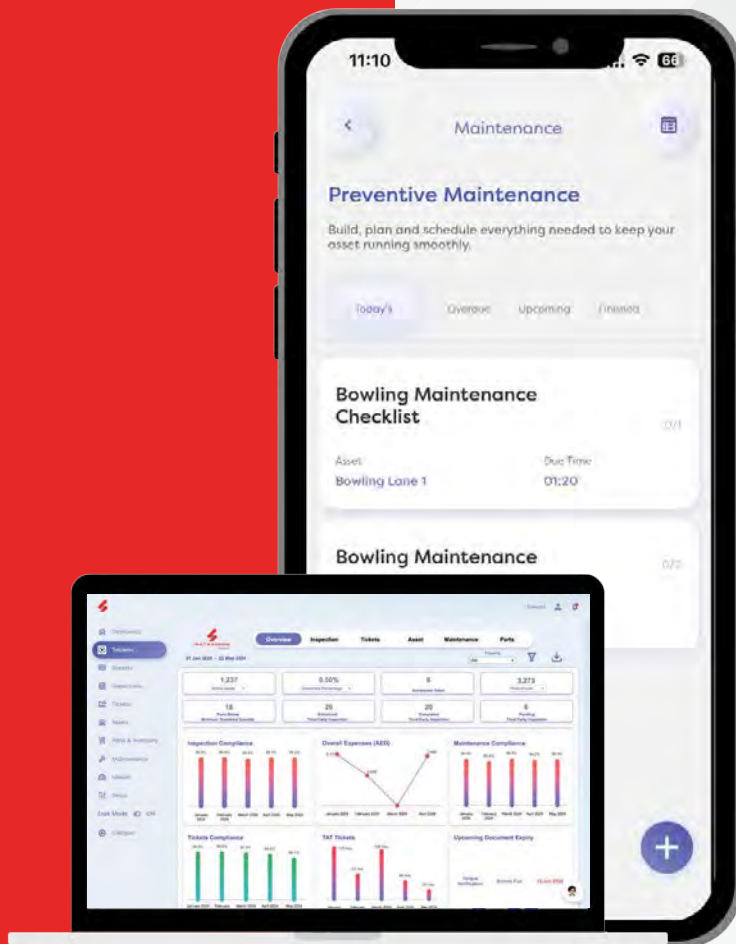
After the sessions, attendees had free time to enjoy the park at their leisure before the event concluded with a closing reception on the roof-top deck of the Grand Pavilion, where attendees had the opportunity to network and connect with industry peers one last time. **FW**

To see highlights of IAAPA Presents: Cedar Point, visit IAAPA.org/PresentsCedarPoint





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2024 GLOBAL EXHIBITORS

4WARD LLC.....	8955	Guangdong Domerry Amusement		KristallTurm.....	10107	Severn Lamb.....	12508
abc rides switzerland.....	12608	Equipment Co. Ltd.....	8760	Lagotronics Projects B.V.....	11213, TT-105	Shenzhen Eternity Technology Ltd.	8583
accesso.....	12104	Guangdong H-FUN Water		LAI Games.....	8568	Simtec Systems GmbH.....	11227
Activate.....	14012	Recreational Articles Co. Ltd.....	12973	LaserBlast.....	8482	Simworr Ltd.....	11113
Aerophile S.A.S.....	10337	Guangdong Jinma Entertainment Corp.		Laserforce International.....	8048	SPI Global Play Ltd.....	10303
Aglare Lighting Co. Ltd.....	8792	Ltd.....	11319	LaserTag.com by Zone.....	8574	Sunkid.....	12223
Alterface Projects.....	11403	Guangdong New Blessing Inflatable		Leisure Activities.....	12739	Synergy Waterpark Rides Pvt. Ltd.....	8512
ALTUS / KOALA EQUIPMENT.....	8238	Products Co. Ltd.....	12558	Liben Group Wenzhou Toy Co. Ltd.....	12023	Technical Park S.N.C.....	12809
Amodino China.....	8052	Guangzhou EPARK Electronic		LightUpToys.com.....	12920	thejuice.....	11125
Aquakita.....	12132	Technology Co. Ltd.....	8620	Mack Rides GmbH & Co. KG.....	10112	Themed Entertainment Assoc. (TEA)...	10629
Arihant Industrial Corp.....	10023	Guangzhou Ifun Park Technology		Martin & Vlemnickx Ltd.....	10035	Themics Philippines Inc.....	8248
Art Attack.....	8280	Co. Ltd.....	14104	MEMOPARK by DEDEM.....	8287	Tongyun Amusement Equipment (Suzhou)	
Avius.....	10710	Guangzhou Infinity Technology		Mich Playground Co. Ltd.....	11324	12827
Axess AG.....	11405	Co. Ltd.....	8437	Moser's Rides S.r.l.....	10619	Triotech.....	10331
Bertazzon 3B Srl.....	12510	Guangzhou Leqi Amusement		Movie Power Technology Co. Ltd.....	8538	TUV NORD.....	11003
Black Light Unity International Ltd.	14305	Equipment Co. Ltd.....	8240	Murphy's Waves Ltd.....	11127	Unis Technology (H.K) Ltd.....	8662
Bob's Space Racers Inc.....	10615	Guangzhou PDL Animation		Neofuns.....	8337	Uremet Corp.....	12826
Brogent Technologies Inc.....	12236	Technology Co. Ltd.....	8766	Nets Tribe.....	8542	Vekoma Rides Manufacturing B.V.....	10126
Brunswick Bowling Products.....	12204	Guangzhou Shunhong Entertainment		Neveplast SRL.....	12016	VENU+.....	8223
Buzzpark.....	11027	Equipment Co. Ltd.....	11401	nWave Pictures SRL.....	11115	Viewpoint Videos.....	12120
Cheer Amusement (Nanjing) Co. Ltd.....	12927	Guangzhou Superwing Animation		OTK Kart Group (Tony Kart).....	8104	Vivaticket.....	10004
China Xiaofeixia.....	12926	Technology Co. Ltd.....	8423	Polgun Waterparks & Attractions.....	12142	Walltopia.....	12216
Clip 'n Climb / Fun Spot.....	12831	Guangzhou Unique Animation		Polin Waterparks.....	12528	Water Technology Inc.....	12709
Cuddles and Friends.....	8154	Technology Co. Ltd.....	8265	Premier Rides Inc.....	11513	Wave Italy.....	9000
DEAL 2025.....	14203	Guangzhou Yuto Amusement		Preston & Barbieri S.r.l.....	11413	Wenzhou Pokiddo Amusement Toys	
Delta Strike International Ltd.....	10437	Technology Co. Ltd.....	8342	ProSlide Technology.....	12406	Co. Ltd.....	12053
Deltrain SA.....	10432	HAFEMA Water Rides GmbH.....	10026	Qilong Amusement Equipment		WhiteWater West Industries Ltd.....	10118
DOF Robotics.....	12516	Hangzhou Hogwood Amusement		Co. Ltd.....	14210	Wibit Sports GmbH.....	12017
Dongguan Unistar Industrial Ltd.....	8539	Equipment Co. Ltd.....	8255	Qingdao Aero Inflatable Co. Ltd.....	8412	Wiegand Josef GMBH & Co. KG.....	10013
Dotto S.r.l.....	10104	Hangzhou Trains Equipment Co. Ltd.....	9021	QubicaAMF Bowling Products.....	10416	Wiegand.Waterrides GmbH.....	10009
Ellis & Associates.....	10632	Haystack Dryers Ltd.....	12707	RCI ADVENTURE PRODUCTS.....	8586	World Waterpark Association.....	12723
Emiliana Luna Park S.r.l.....	10117	HB Leisure Ltd.....	12960	Red Raion Srl.....	12823	X-KART.....	8654
Empex Watertoys.....	11206	Helix Leisure USA Inc (Embed).....	11320	Rides and Fun Srl.....	11109	Zamperla.....	10132
ETF Ride Systems.....	10625	Hologate.....	12428	RMC.....	8016	Zhejiang Lejian Amusement Toys	
Eurogames SRL.....	11313	Hualong Dino Works.....	8155	ROLLER.....	10439	Co. Ltd.....	8667
Experience UK.....	8624	Huss Park Attractions GmbH.....	12703	Rover International.....	10041	Zhengzhou Bigjoys Amusement	
FABBRI GROUP.....	12116	I.E. Park S.r.l./Amusement Rides &		S A M.....	11013	Co. Ltd.....	8734
FlowRider.....	10317	SOLI Bumper Cars.....	12110	S&S Worldwide Inc.....	10633	Zhengzhou Wolong Amusement	
Flying Animation Technology Co. Ltd.....	8235	IAAPI.....	14107	Sacoo Cashless System.....	8362	Equipment Co. Ltd.....	8962
Fujian Sijia Industrial Material Co. Ltd.....	14308	ICombat Laser Tag.....	11201	Sally Dark Rides.....	10034	Zhongshan Luck Amusement Machine	
Gateway Ticketing Systems Inc.....	12715	Immersive Planet.....	12107	Sartori Rides Srl.....	12815	Co. Ltd.....	8484
Gerstlauer Amusement Rides GmbH.....	12903	Intamin Amusement Rides Int. Corp.		SBF-VISA Group.....	10020	Zhuji Yinuo Weite Knitting Co.,Ltd.....	9112
Give Kids the World.....	10800	Est.....	12504	Sega Amusements International		Zhuoyuan Co. Ltd.....	8339
Gosetto S.r.l.....	12915	Intelligent Entertainment.....	8148, 8151	Ltd.....	8370, 8470	ZIERER GmbH & Co. KG.....	12803
Great Coasters International Inc.....	10311	INTERCARD INC.....	11419	SELA GROUP S.R.L.....	12909	Zigong Gengu Dinosaurs Science And	
		InterPark Magazine.....	10018	Semnox Solutions LLC.....	8570	Technology Co. Ltd.....	8756
		iPlayCO.....	10129				

2024 FIRST TIME EXHIBITORS

ACC Gbr.....	8704	Guangzhou Ailai Intelligent		Lampuga GmbH.....	14412	Sweet Robo.....	8826
Activate.....	14012	Technology Co. Ltd.....	14311	Laser Quest.....	11000	Swissdeck Europe.....	8677
Advatek.....	TT-104	Guangzhou Colorful park Animation		L'atelier du simu.....	14003	T & F Sports Apparel.....	8134
Al Spaw.....	14404	Technology Co. Ltd.....	8268	Leisure Technical Consultants Limited.....	8408	The Dutch Drift BV.....	14405
Amodino China.....	8052	Guangzhou Funzone Games Co. Ltd.....	14103	Livingprojects.....	12108	The Music Factory.....	8638
AMS PLUS Inc.....	8640	Guangzhou Leon Amusement		Magicnets Sp. z o.o.....	14109	TimeMission.....	8058
ART Nzo BVBA.....	TT-009	Technology Co. Ltd.....	8552	Mamm'out bvba.....	11001	Tomorrowland Leisure.....	8116
Aulon Games.....	8022	Guangzhou Planet Inflatables		MB SHOW s.r.l.s.....	12008	Touch Magix, Inc.....	8024
Avasto Recreatietechniek.....	8355	Limited.....	14309	New Era Dinosaur Landscape		Toysmar Playground.....	8827
Batfast Cricket Centres Ltd.....	8723	Guangzhou Powerful Toys Co.,Ltd.....	11101	Production Co. Ltd.....	14108	traceless.....	14409
Beat The Storm.....	14301	Guangzhou Shunhong Entertainment		NSM Music Ltd.....	TT-014	Twister.....	14401
Beppe.....	8957	Equipment Co., Ltd.....	11401	Oakfusion sp. z o.o.....	14009	Unilux, Inc.....	TT-002
Carl Stahl ARC GmbH.....	TT-018	Guangzhou Solar Space Electronic		OASYS Water Park Systems.....	11503	Vectair Systems Ltd.....	14410
Chance Rides LLC.....	10616	Technology Co., Ltd.....	8008	Okko Global.....	12037	VideoBooth Systems Ltd.....	11402
clickables online marketing.....	8139	Guangzhou Yanhe Trade Co., Ltd.....	14204	Perfectly Clear by EyeQ.....	TT-015	Virtual Zone Nexus SL.....	8916
CM.com.....	14110	Guangzhou Yoyo Amusement Co. Ltd.....	12658	Pharos Architectural Controls.....	11024	Vistafolia Ltd.....	11305
Colordrops.....	14212	Guestup.....	8137	Playdiscount GmbH.....	8946	VR History.....	TT-003
De Haardt bv.....	8508	Hangzhou Hogwood Amusement		Playfun Games Co., Ltd.....	TT-004	Water Safety Products, Inc.....	14209
Dewi Online.....	TT-010	Equipment Co. Ltd.....	8255	Pura Vida Europe Ltd.....	8961	Wenzhou Hello Amusement	
Diplik GmbH.....	14504	Hebei Haiber Play Equipment		Puttbrothers.....	8518	Equipment Co. Ltd.....	8828
DP Company srl.....	8782	Co. Ltd.....	14008	Quiz Boxing.....	8528	Wider Matrix (GZ) Technology Co. Ltd..	14411
Dutch Wheels BV.....	8507	henbrandt.....	12982	RaceParx.....	14306	Wild in Art Limited.....	8725
E-Sun Amusement Machine Co. Ltd.....	TT-006	Hengshui Jingu Jinlantern Art Co. Ltd.....	14208	RAVE Sports.....	8738	Wild Republic UK Ltd.....	8727
ETF - SOIOS.....	10724	Hopopop.....	TT-103	Reccras BV.....	TT-001	Wittenstein.....	8914
Experimental Park.....	8634	Hoyt & Lavt.....	14406	Red Castle.....	11601	X-KART.....	8654
FareHarbor.....	14307	IMAScore GbR.....	8316	ReFerox Racing Simulators.....	8847	Zhengzhou Bigjoys Amusement	
Ferelli Creations.....	TT-005	Index Creative Village.....	14506	Retro Arcade Remake.....	8949	Co. Ltd.....	8734
FIDLOCK GmbH.....	14011	Interactive X-Wall.....	9309	Safari Dekor.....	14205	Zhongshan LGM Amusement E	
Food-Kings Service GmbH.....	8028	iTicket.....	8216	sensalytics GmbH.....	TT-016	quipment Co. Ltd.....	8821
FOTODIASTASI - FDS Illumination.....	8320	JPB Systeme.....	12207	Shuffly.....	8922	Zigong Dinosaurs Technology Co. Ltd..	8055
Fox Originals.....	8535	Kiddyfun Eventmodule.....	12957	SPS Filets.....	8927	Zigong Haitian Culture Co. Ltd.....	8207
Fujian Sijia Industrial Material Co. Ltd.....	14308	Kids Marketeers B.V.....	8813	Stern Pinball, Inc.....	8013	Zigong LongXiangJiuYu	
Future Design Sp. z o. o.....	9012	Kinetron Teknoloji A.S.....	8039	STY Waterparks.....	8440	Technology Ltd.....	12659
Glophen.....	14408	KioSoft.....	14509	Surf Loch.....	TT-017	Zigong Yuhua Technology Co. Ltd.....	14106
		Kletterstein BV.....	8000				

IAAPA Evolves Awards Programs for 2024 and 2025

FUNWORLD SPOKE WITH MPUME MABUZA, president and board chairperson of the African Association of Visitor Experiences and Attractions (AAVEA) and member of the IAAPA Global Awards Committee, on what members can expect from this year's award categories, along with what's in store for IAAPA Honors 2025.

FUNWORLD: What are IAAPA Awards?

MPUME MABUZA:

IAAPA Awards represent a prestigious recognition of excellence within the global attractions industry. They celebrate outstanding achievements by facilities, manufacturers, suppliers, and individuals worldwide.

There are two main categories of IAAPA Awards: the IAAPA Individual Achievement Awards and the IAAPA Brass Ring Excellence Awards.

The IAAPA Individual Achievement Awards honor remarkable individuals across four categories: the IAAPA Hall of Fame Award, the Inspiration Award, Service Awards, and the Young Professional of the Year Award.

The IAAPA Brass Ring Excellence Awards focus on excellence in operations and Expo exhibits, covering areas such as

marketing, live entertainment, food and beverage, and more.

What's new with IAAPA Awards in 2024?

There are some exciting changes to the IAAPA Awards this year! Notably, the IAAPA Service Awards are now available in each region, allowing IAAPA to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to the association and the industry within their home regions.

The new Inspiration Award recognizes individuals who, while pursuing their dreams, have greatly benefited the industry in their region. This award is a prestigious honor, second only to the IAAPA Hall of Fame Award.

There is also a new Sustainability Excellence Award, focusing on outstanding facility sustainability programs or projects. This award recognizes excellence in sustainable facility management, showcasing economic viability, environmental protection, and social equity.

Finally, there is a new Live Entertainment Excellence Award. The Showstopper in Live Entertainment recognizes a specific element in a stage or atmosphere show that significantly enhances the production and entertainment value, including advanced technology, scenic design, audio/sound, costume design, and more.


True or False: the IAAPA Hall of Fame Awards will return to IAAPA Expo?

Absolutely true! The IAAPA Hall of Fame Awards will return to IAAPA Expo. This year, a special standalone event named the IAAPA Hall of Fame Celebratory Affair will be held on Monday, Nov. 18, at 7 p.m. to honor the inductees as part of IAAPA Expo in Orlando.

Can you share where IAAPA Honors 2025 will take place?

IAAPA Honors 2025 will be an incredible three-day event at Europa-Park in Rust, Germany, April 28-30, 2025. This groundbreaking event will bring together IAAPA members to celebrate the industry's accomplishments. Winners from the 2024-25 year will receive their trophies and be celebrated here. The event will also feature EDUTours and panel sessions with previous award winners.

When is the deadline to apply?

All IAAPA Award applications are currently open, except the IAAPA Hall of Fame Award, whose deadline has already passed for 2024 consideration. However, it's never too early to begin thinking about who you want to nominate for this honor in 2025! Visit [IAAPA.org/Awards](https://www.iaapa.org/Awards) for all the application deadlines and submission details. 





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Magic Beyond the Gates: The IAAPA World Passport for Kids

GIVE KIDS THE WORLD VILLAGE (GKTW) in Kissimmee, Florida, provides cost-free vacations to children with critical illnesses and their families—and holds a special place in the hearts of visitors. However, the magic doesn't have to end when they return home. Through the IAAPA World Passport for Kids program, IAAPA member attractions can offer families a year of complimentary visits, extending the joy beyond GKTW's gates.

Wish child Piper Landres has created memories through the IAAPA World Passport for Kids program with her parents and younger brother, Nixon. Visiting participating attractions like Elitch Gardens and the San Diego Zoo, following the family's wish trip to Walt Disney World, brought continued joy to the Landres family during a difficult time. "While a cancer diagnosis brings unbelievable fear, we were so fortunate to experience life-changing memories and relationships that acted as cushions to the blows of cancer," shares Piper's father, Doug Landres.


"Through this program, countless children have been able to extend what one wish child called the 'magic medicine' the Village experience provides," says GKTW President and CEO Pamela Landwirth. "We create the happiness that inspires hope, and through your participation in the World Passport for Kids, attractions leaders and their venues can help give the greatest gift of all to children who need it most."



Here's how The IAAPA World Passport for Kids program works:

- Upon departing GKTW, families receive an IAAPA World Passport for Kids certificate that includes a list of participating attractions.
- These families can choose from the list and coordinate directly with the attraction they'd like to visit.
- The passport is valid for one year, allowing the wish child and their immediate family a chance to create more lasting memories.

To become a partner in the program, attractions are encouraged to:

- Complete and submit the Partner Contact Information form at [IAAPA.org/PartnerContactForm](https://iaapa.org/PartnerContactForm)
- Once attraction facilities are accepted, they provide complimentary admission to wish families. Some also opt to provide additional perks, such as free parking, wheelchair rentals, or meals. 

Those interested in supporting the program may consider donating items from GKTW's Wish List, volunteering, or attending fundraising events, such as those held during IAAPA Expo, to support GKTW's mission. To learn more, email Ken Facey at kenf@gktw.org



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IAAPA caters to the varied needs of industry stakeholders and offers three membership categories:

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- **Manufacturer/Supplier/Consultant:** Tailored for companies engaged in manufacturing, supplying, or consulting within the attractions sector, this membership extends across the entire organizational spectrum.
- **Individual:** Crafted for professionals operating within the attractions industry, this membership offers tailored categories catering to diverse career stages, including young professionals, retirees, educators, and students.

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IAAPA membership affords unparalleled advantages aimed at driving strategic growth and fostering professional development.

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- **Funworld Magazine:** Gain access to the industry's preeminent

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- **IAAPA News Daily:** Stay informed with exclusive e-newsletters, delivering timely updates and insights from across the global attractions landscape.
- **IAAPA.org Access:** Seamlessly navigate industry news, event information, educational resources, and regional updates via IAAPA.org, the association's centralized online platform.

Connections

- **Expos and Events:** Experience premier networking, innovation, and knowledge-sharing opportunities at IAAPA's flagship events, where members enjoy exclusive perks and savings on registration fees, exhibit spaces, and event tickets.
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IAAPA membership serves as a catalyst for professional growth and industry advancement, offering a wealth of benefits tailored to meet the diverse needs of attractions professionals worldwide. Join IAAPA today and unlock the full spectrum of advantages poised to elevate success within the global attractions industry. Visit [IAAPA.org](https://iaapa.org) to learn more. 

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THE IAAPA HOSTED BUYER PROGRAM offers a myriad of benefits for qualified individuals and companies looking to enhance their business relationships and learn about new products at IAAPA Expo in Orlando, Europe, or Asia. The exclusive program is tailored for decision-makers with significant purchasing power, providing them with unparalleled access to leading global suppliers, complimentary travel and hotel accommodations, exclusive networking opportunities, invaluable education sessions, and access to the Hosted Buyer Lounge.

Participant Benefits

Lachlan Farquharson, general manager of Reefsedge Resort & Waterpark in Cairns, Australia, benefited from the access provided by the IAAPA Hosted Buyer Program. As Reefsedge Resort & Waterpark

approached its final development approval, Farquharson attended the IAAPA Expo as a hosted buyer, gaining insights, resources, and connections crucial in developing his new project. "Attending the IAAPA Expo as a hosted buyer provided unparalleled access to leading suppliers from around the globe," says Farquharson. "Having everyone at the same event was incredibly beneficial, as it allowed us to seamlessly coordinate with multiple suppliers and integrate their offerings on the spot." This exposure proved instrumental in preparing for the development of Reefsedge Resort & Waterpark, which will soon be under construction. Stage 1 is projected to open in early 2026. 



"Having everyone at the same event was incredibly beneficial, as it allowed us to seamlessly coordinate with multiple suppliers and integrate their offerings on the spot."


— Lachlan Farquharson

Know a professional who could benefit from the IAAPA Hosted Buyer Program? Send this link: [IAAPA.org/HostedBuyer](https://iaapa.org/HostedBuyer)

Join an IAAPA Committee in 2025: Application Deadline Oct. 1, 2024

IAAPA committee and task force members dedicate their time, expertise, and talents to making the association a progressive, proactive, and strong organization. Task forces and committees represent our membership and support IAAPA's mission, vision, and strategic plan. IAAPA is looking for a diverse group of members who can represent different regions, constituencies, and subject disciplines. The work of committees and task forces varies based on

the needs of the association and is outlined within an annual work plan.

Serving as an IAAPA volunteer allows you to advance the association and grow your network while giving back to the attractions industry. IAAPA is currently seeking professionals to fill roles on the IAAPA Regional Advisory Board, along with safety, education and professional development, manufacturer and supplier, and sustainability committees. 

Review the eligibility criteria and complete the volunteer application form: [IAAPA.org/2025Volunteer](https://iaapa.org/2025Volunteer)



STEVEN MILLER

This is a partial listing of upcoming IAAPA events. Event details are as of August 14, 2024, and subject to change. For the most up-to-date information, visit [IAAPA.org/Events](https://iaapa.org/Events)

SEPTEMBER 2024

IAAPA APAC Trade Summit

4-5 | Shanghai

IAAPA Public Affairs Conference

9-11 | Washington, D.C.

IAAPA Institute for Attractions Professionals (IAP)

17-19 | Brazil

IAAPA Safety Institute

22 | Amsterdam



23-26 | Amsterdam

OCTOBER 2024

IAAPA Week: Water Parks

8-10 | Online

IAAPA Meetup: Knott's Berry Farm

15 | Los Angeles

IAAPA Week: FEC and LBE Latin America, Caribbean

22-24 | Online

IAAPA AAVEA African Summit

28-30 | Johannesburg

NOVEMBER 2024

IAAPA Presents: France

12 | Paris



18-22 | Orlando

DECEMBER 2024

IAAPA Indoor Entertainment Summit

10-11 | Milan

JANUARY 2025



IAAPA Explores: CES

7-10 | Las Vegas

IAAPA FEC Summit 2025

19-21 | New Orleans

FEBRUARY 2025

IAAPA Middle East Trade Summit 2025

18-19 | Riyadh



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- **Refine Your Business Strategies:** Gain fresh perspectives and actionable insights to optimize your operations and drive sustainable growth.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ▶ IAAPA EXPLORES: BRAZIL AT IAAPA EXPO - NOV. 18-22, 2024
- ▶ IAAPA EXPLORES: CES - JAN. 7 - 10, 2025





Finding Light in Adversity

Liseberg's great resilience in the wake
of Oceana's devastating fire

Story and photos by Scott Fais

ON THE MORNING OF FEB. 12, Thomas Sjostrand found himself enjoying a snow skiing holiday in the north of Sweden. The vacation served as a final respite for Sjostrand, Liseberg's chief project officer (CPO), before beginning the final push to complete Oceana, Liseberg's new indoor water park resort.

"I felt my phone while I was waiting to get up on the ski lift," Sjostrand remembers of the vibration through his ski jacket at 10:10 a.m. "My pocket was shaking."

Upon pulling out his mobile phone, Sjostrand froze.

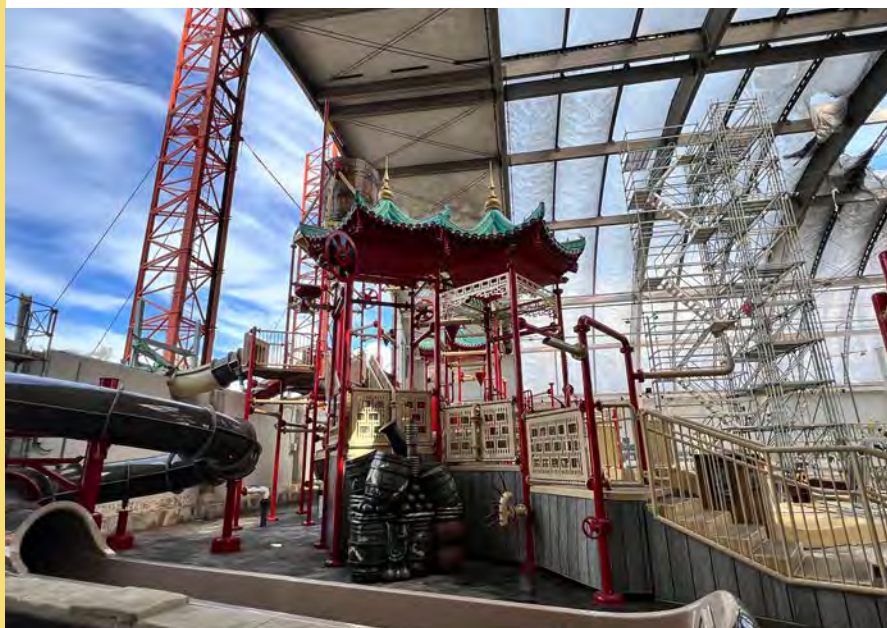
Images on his smartphone displayed thick, black smoke emanating from Oceana following a massive explosion. Calls then began arriving in quick succession.

While Sjostrand received messages on the slopes, Liseberg CEO Andreas Andersen began receiving phone calls as he dropped his dog off at day care. From his vantage point, Andersen observed a stream of heavy smoke wafting over Göteborg.

"You could see the damage was substantial," he recalls upon arriving at the park. Meanwhile, Sjostrand got out of line at the chairlift and returned to the cabin his family had rented. Both men jumped on a crisis call at 10:30 a.m. Sjostrand remained on the call until 3 p.m., before driving back to Göteborg, home to the century-old Swedish theme park.

OPPOSITE:
Oceana's grand
hall in a state of
deconstruction
during Funworld's
site visit in June
2023.

RIGHT: Oceana's
splash fort,
complete with its
tipping bucket,
survived the blaze.



“I’m ready to rebuild.”

— Thomas Sjostrand,
Liseberg chief project officer

In the hours and days that followed, Liseberg leadership was forced to face the uncertainty of how to move forward on a multimillion-krona project—and found themselves relying upon each other for direction and support.

“Trust between colleagues is a key thing. I think this glued us all together,” Sjostrand says.

The devastating fire took place 110 days before Oceana’s scheduled June 1 grand opening.

“We were so close,” Andersen says reflectively, pausing to look out a window facing Oceana during a conversation with Funworld days after the proposed grand opening in June.

Liseberg provided IAAPA News exclusive access to the beloved property and her devoted caretakers in June 2024. Key stakeholders shared with Funworld their learnings and advice for other attractions leaders when uncertainty strikes.

In the Beginning

The year was 2013. Liseberg had just purchased a shuttered automotive factory just beyond its gates that manufactured gears for Saab and Opel.

“We started to think what we should do with the land,” Sjostrand recalls. While a hotel and indoor water park topped the list, Liseberg’s board of directors challenged park planners to present additional ideas. They went on to create 33 different options.

“It was everything—blue skying: retail, aquarium, brand experience, expanding

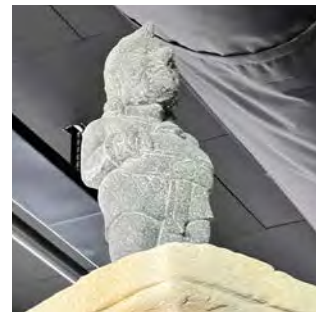
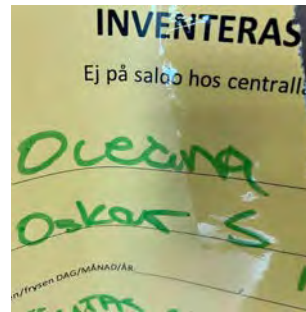
the amusement park, etc. etc.,” Sjostrand tells Funworld. From there, planners narrowed down their options to eight concepts that best honored the purpose of Liseberg: to help attract people to the city of Göteborg and make memories, according to Sjostrand. With a hotel and indoor water park facility, Liseberg could now attract visitors year-round—and drive revenue—especially during the chilly winter and early spring, when the theme park is closed for the season.

Andersen says the decision was data driven, while the naming criteria for Oceana had to be poetic, self-explanatory, and mean the same in Swedish and English.

“It’s about journeys, going out in the world, and coming back with ideas and inspiration,” Andersen says.

Liseberg sought insight from its longtime theme park designer David Schofield, along with partners such as WTI, Wingårdhs (who also designed the neighboring Grand Curiosa Hotel), Swedish contractor NCC, and slide provider WhiteWater.

Construction at the urban site trudged on at varying paces throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, supply chain delays, and quality upgrades. (After the prefabricated patterns of a Brazilian stone tile arrived with unanticipated gaps, artisans separated each stone from its netting and laid each rock by hand. “We wanted to create something that had a good sense of quality; we wanted to work with natural materials,” says Andersen.)



UPPER LEFT: Oceana's charred slide tower as it appeared in June 2024 as demolition crews begin removal. UPPER RIGHT: A crane elevates a mini dozer with a jackhammer attachment to aid in the removal of the slide tower.

CENTER, LEFT TO RIGHT: A deconstruction worker created a cross on a shipping container inside Oceana's atrium; An inspirational message of "Be happy" appears on the protective plywood in Oceana's service elevator; A shipping label spells out Oceana as a destination, foreshadowing of the indoor water park's planned debut in 2026; An untouched statue stands guard over the indoor water park.

BOTTOM LEFT: Pontus Hallsberg using the light on his smart phone to illuminate the near-pristine condition of a locker room. ABOVE: A turtle carving remains intact, as if it is swimming toward a bright future.

In this early February 2024 photo, Oceana's wave pool is full, as the park glows at dusk over Göteborg.



“I don’t remember much from that day. It’s like little film snippets.”

—Andreas Andersen, Liseberg CEO



PONTUS HALLSBERG

By Jan. 15, 2024, crews had filled the wave pool with water for the first time.

“It was a very special moment. All the primary stakeholders from the project were there. The press was invited,” recalls Pontus Hallsberg, Liseberg’s commercial coordinator. Perhaps one of Liseberg’s most visible employees, Hallsberg serves as Liseberg’s trusted ambassador, providing tours for VIP guests, politicians, and business leaders. “We took turns holding the hose; we laughed, and we were excited that a big step was reached.”

Hallsberg visited Oceana for the last time three days before the fire.

“The pools were filled; the water was rippling in the waterfalls; the paint on the large murals in the hallway had dried; the handmade rock formations were finished; the last mosaic of the Brazilian natural stone was laid; and the slides were clean of all construction dust,” he says. “Even though it was not complete in terms of appearance ... you could really see what kind of soul Oceana would have.”

Sticking to the Plan

After dropping off his dog on the morning of the fire, Andersen joined other members of Oceana’s crisis team in a third-floor conference room. The team was predetermined—even before the construction crew’s first shovel hit the dirt in 2020. The plan spelled out who would have a seat at the table should disaster strike. The team quickly determined it was necessary to evacuate guests and employees from the posh Liseberg Grand Curiosa Hotel and adjacent office buildings. Hallsberg reflects on how the breeze on Feb. 12 blew the smoke away from the hotel and theme park—potentially limiting the fire’s scope.

During the first few days, no members of the crisis team toured the site (after all, they were not trained first responders).

“You want the crisis management team to be a little away from where it happens,” recommends Andersen. “If you have to make decisions, you don’t want to be in the middle of everything.”

Sjostrand focused on the communication with the fire brigade, police, and main contractor.

“I had all the information,” recalls Sjostrand, who then had the duty to share updates with the crisis team, but not the press. The responsibility of spokesman fell to Andersen.

“We knew from the beginning somebody was missing,” Sjostrand tells Funworld. Unaccounted for was Patrik Gillholm, a well-regarded former employee who returned to Liseberg to work on Oceana as a contractor.

Investigators knew where Gillholm’s mobile phone had last pinged before losing its signal on Feb. 12. Yet, with Oceana’s multi-story slide tower still smoldering, it was not safe to enter the structure until five days after the explosion that consumed a majority of Oceana’s water slides.

“I had to tell them, ‘The police are not searching anywhere else,’” Sjostrand says when reviving somber memories of informing the crisis team of Gillholm’s passing.

[Editor’s Note: Funworld will not speculate on the cause of the fire. The Swedish Accident Investigation Authority is conducting its investigation and is projected to issue its full report in spring 2025.]

Staying Strong, Being Bold

“Our project had literally gone up in smoke—burnt to ashes—and we had lost our colleague Patrik,” Hallsberg reflects. “The coming weeks was a period of tears, sorrow, frustration, anger, hopelessness, and emptiness.”

When faced with adversity, Sjostrand recommends other professionals try to follow a balanced schedule.

“I went home every night,” Liseberg’s CPO says, electing to drive home instead of sleeping in his office. “Emotionally, it’s quite tough,” he says. “You wake up in the middle of the night. It’s quite terrible.” Thus, Sjostrand gave himself permission to visit the gym, go for a jog on Saturday mornings, have dinner with his family, and take each day step-by-step.

“You need to see the small glimpses of light,” he recommends. “You need to meet your friends, your colleagues,” adding that genuine discussion can be therapeutic.

The park provided grief counselors, with Sjostrand explaining many employees booked appointments for each other, feeling that some of their fellow colleagues could use the one-on-one assistance. And within the office, shedding a tear was permissible.

“I did that with them: On my team, we cried together,” Sjostrand says. He also believes sharing details internally is just as important as sharing information with the media.

“If you send out a press release, you should inform your team first,” he says.

When facing a crisis, Andersen compares leadership to building equity in a bank account.

“That capital is trust, respect, transparency. When something like this happens, you have to withdraw from that account,” Andersen says. He recalls admiring the professionalism of his team in the early days of the disaster. “They were just so good. They were like an orchestra—all the instruments they played together—without me needing to conduct every little detail. I think this is attributed to many years of coexistence with the same team.”

Pivot Planning

While a team of architects, designers, and contractors invested years in the planning of Oceana, they took only months to create a plan that in effect will “secure, fix, and

Remembering Patrik Gillholm

The colleague lost at Oceana

by Johanna Gärdfors,
Head of Projects, Liseberg

It’s one thing to lose something you’ve been working on for many years and see your dream disappear in flames. Then it is something completely different to lose a close colleague and friend.

Patrik Gillholm was the only one who did not manage to get out of Oceana when the fire broke out. And in many ways, it was his great responsibility for the project, for his colleagues, that made him stay. When others took a break, it was Patrik who ran to the top of the tower to solve one last task.

This is part of the memory we carry with us. His willingness to get everything right, his dedication, his perfectionism. At the same time, Patrik was versatile like few others with his unique combination of social and technical skills. And an ability to make projects both effective, safe, and fun.

Between the years 2016-19, Patrik was employed at Liseberg, but in recent years, he worked as a consultant for our company. It is with great sorrow and regret that we continue the project without him.



take things down,” according to Sjostrand. Deconstruction began this summer to remove Oceana’s charred slide tower. In the coming months, crews will remove a dozen scorched wooden arches over the wave pool. Each beam weighs 22 tons. Sjostrand says teams will use the winter months to safely “take one down, and then add a new one” in a succinct fashion to maintain structural integrity. Elsewhere on the site, Sjostrand’s team is working with Liseberg’s insurance companies to determine if everything is still operational—from the air conditioner to the watertight capabilities of the hand-laid tile floor. Navigating the insurance process is expected to take more than a year. (Meantime, more than 100 trees—some nine meters tall—and bushes earmarked for the project are still in waiting at greenhouses located in the Netherlands.) Sjostrand says “good conversations” continue with WhiteWater to again fabricate water slides for the facility.

“We were proud of Oceana,” says Hallsberg. “For me, it was a symbol of our faith in the future.”

Moving Forward

On July 17, Liseberg’s board of directors made the formal decision to rebuild Oceana following several months of extensive research. Park leaders invested time completing cost analyses, commissioning sustainability studies, and attending countless meetings following the blaze. After pouring over the data, their investigation determined rebuilding Oceana would prove more economical than demolishing the structure and later commencing an alternative project on the same site.

Oceana under construction. Each of the arches will need to be carefully replaced, one at a time, in the months ahead.



“My body and mind had such a roller coaster experience of emotions during that period.”

— Pontus Hallsberg,
Liseberg commercial coordinator



“Based on the various scenarios we have developed, there is really no alternative to completing the project. This applies both to Liseberg and Göteborg as a tourism destination,” says Andersen.

A complete overhaul would entail write-downs of large values and not be justifiable from a sustainability perspective.

The entrance lobby, ticketing area, kitchen, and locker rooms escaped unharmed. Even the new turnstiles remain in place and safely shrouded in their protective packaging. Necessary water filtration equipment located in the basement of the facility appears to be in working condition. During Funworld’s visit in June, a high-water mark was evident on a cellar wall, a reminder of the water sprayed on the structure by firefighters on Feb. 12. At less than a foot tall, the standing water did not harm the equipment already installed. Wisely, Liseberg set the equipment on permanent, elevated risers, thus protecting equipment from a flood.

The slide tower will be rebuilt with a new aesthetic that will differ in appearance from the original tower that burned. For Hallsberg, a change on the horizon is welcome.

“I hope that sometime in the future I get to experience that feeling and pride again,” he shares.

Financing the Return

Until the cause of the fire is definitively determined and clarity is found on compensation, the project will be bridge-financed by Liseberg. This will initially be handled through re-prioritization of

Liseberg’s investments and cashflow.

Further bridge-financing from the city of Göteborg—Liseberg’s owner—may become necessary during reconstruction.

“We have good hopes of covering the costs of rebuilding Oceana, but the process is complex and long—perhaps several years,” Andersen says. “A lengthy process can jeopardize the future of the project and, in all likelihood, increase the cost significantly. It will be a tough journey, where we will have to prioritize our resources, our investments. And it may also have consequences for our organizational set-up.”

Reconstruction will begin this autumn with a new completion date targeted for 2026.

Despite the challenges ahead, Liseberg is bullish on the future. Already, a plan filed and approved by the city of Göteborg allows for the park to greater develop its southeast corner next its new neighbor, the World of Volvo, an experience center and museum celebrating the Swedish automotive manufacturer. That includes room for several additional hotels, an indoor or outdoor expansion of Oceana, and an expansion of the traditional amusement park.

“We’ll be here for another 100 years,” Sjostrand concludes with confidence. **FW**

Scott Fais is the director of global editorial at IAAPA. The six-time Emmy Award-winning journalist enjoys visiting creative attractions of all kinds—and meeting the professionals behind them. Connect with him on [LinkedIn](#).





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Insights from Gröna Lund

Learning from the Jetline roller coaster accident



by Scott Fais

IN JUNE, THE SWEDISH ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION AUTHORITY published its final investigative report into the Jetline roller coaster accident at the Gröna Lund amusement park that occurred in 2023. (Sweden's National Accident Investigation Board [SHK] investigates accidents and serious incidents from a safety perspective, whether they occur on land, at sea, or in the air.)

As the global attractions industry's trusted source for news and insight, Funworld visited Gröna Lund in Stockholm days after SHK issued their report to gain perspective and share how attractions around the world can institute changes that will prevent a similar accident.

The Accident

The Jetline roller coaster opened at Gröna Lund in 1988. The ride track stretches 800 meters long with a maximum speed of 90 km per hour. Each train features seven cars and has a capacity of 14 passengers.

On Sunday, June 25, 2023, a train carrying 11 riders came to an abrupt stop after having traveled approximately one-third of the track. At the time, Jetline had three trains in operation (with trains sitting in a storage track area).

SHK determined the accident occurred when the carrying arm (wheel suspension) at the front of the train broke. The parts of the

support arm—with the wheels on either side of the train—completely detached and fell off. This led to heavy braking as the underframe of the car dropped towards the track and began hitting joints in the track structure. The heavy braking forced passengers to be thrown forward against their safety bars. As a result, three of the passengers fell out of their car, resulting in one death and one serious injury. Two of the passengers who remained seated in the train sustained serious injuries, while all others endured minor injuries.

Causes of Failure

The report listed a fracture of the support arm occurred. This failure was a result of “insufficient strength,” due to deficiencies in the welded joints and the absence of an essential part inside the pipe structure. The support arm that failed was one of five ordered by Gröna Lund and manufactured by a contractor in 2019.

SHK wrote in their investigation the

accident was caused by deficiencies in the ordering, manufacturing, and lack of inspection of the new support arms. Insufficient checks did not guarantee the workmanship—both during manufacturing and before the support arms were installed on the train. Ultimately, SHK's report concluded the work carried out at Gröna Lund did not provide adequate safety against accidents on Jetline. (The investigation also revealed shortcomings in Sweden's rules for amusement ride equipment and weak public supervision.) SHK made safety recommendations to Gröna Lund, the Police Authority, the Swedish Government, and IAAPA.

Prevention and Best Practices

Using the example of Gröna Lund's experiences, SHK's investigation, and the changes implemented at the park since June 2023, CEO Jan Eriksson offered full transparency when he sat down with Funworld to provide ways operators can implement new best-practices, update processes, and better anticipate safety needs—all with the goal of preventing accidents in the future.

Fund Travel for Inspection

"To avoid similar situations, going forward, we will be a lot closer to the manufacturers and together with DEKRA, our testing partner," Eriksson says. This includes asking representatives to review documentation and to travel to inspect the fabricating process.

"If you look at the spare parts or the work that's been done on other rides since the accident, we've done quite a few on-site visits together with DEKRA," he says. Eriksson recommends maintenance leaders include a budget for travel and send a member of their team to inspect the part-making process at a vendor's location.

Transparency

The SHK investigation revealed that Gröna Lund's chosen supplier—one which the park contracted with for 15 years—used a third-party supplier to complete welding work. Eriksson says this act was done without consulting his team.

"Without informing us—that was sort

"I'd recommend having the inspectors and the engineering team on board from the beginning."

— Jan Eriksson, CEO



of the first big mistake in the manufacturing process," he says. Using this example, he says maintenance leaders and their contractors need to maintain a continuous dialogue through the production process.

Open Communication

A culture of open communication—where questions are welcomed—is paramount. Eriksson says the third-party supplier had internal discussions that expressed uncertainties about Jetline's manufacturing drawings, provided by Schwarzkopf, the ride's maker in 1988.

"[Their questions] were never aired with our partner—or with us. So, it stayed within the third-party supplier ... but, they made a choice—and unfortunately—they made the wrong choice," he says.

Moving forward, Eriksson promises Gröna Lund will remain "much more in the loop in every step of the way."

Proper Training and Certification

The SHK investigation also found that the welder who performed the work on Jetline's carrier arms in 2019 did not have the proper experience or the needed certification.

"But they still accepted the job and never aired the uncertainties that they had, which was catastrophic," Eriksson shares. He urges attraction leaders take time to ensure their chosen vendor has the bandwidth, skill, and proficiency to complete an order safely.


"I'd recommend having the inspectors and the engineering team on board from the beginning," he says. This includes bringing all parties to the table for a planning meeting where a ride maintenance team can identify the critical points, needed skill sets, and what type of testing could eliminate risks.

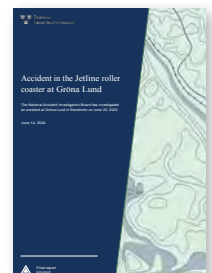
Documentation and Research

Eriksson also stresses that attractions need to develop organized documentation for each ride—listing all maintenance, service history, mechanical updates, inspections, and controls.

"In the light of the accident, of course, we've looked through all of our supplier contacts, all of our spare parts handling, etc., going back a couple of years to make sure that we haven't had a similar process somewhere else along the line," he says, explaining to Funworld that no other ride at Gröna Lund has a parallel history to Jetline.

Conclusion

Gröna Lund made the decision to permanently shutter Jetline. The ride is scheduled to be dismantled following the 2024 season. 



Discover More Online

Additional resources that operators may use to generate greater conversations about safety and ride maintenance await in the IAAPA News Hub. Visit [IAAPA.org/Jetline](https://iaapa.org/Jetline) to read the full report from the Swedish Accident Investigation Authority, learn from detailed photos, and discover additional context that can strengthen safety protocols.



The French
park's CEO
reflects on
35 years of
Gaulish magic

by Juliana Gilling

Astérix Adventures



Park costumer characters Astérix & Obélix and their friends posed for a photo during the park's 35th anniversary.

Parc Astérix first occupied a special place in the hearts of the French and comic book fans since its opening in 1989. The park is themed to French hero Astérix and his pal Obélix, the characters created by René Goscinny and Albert Uderzo. Throughout its 35 years of operation, Parc Astérix's beloved characters and distinctively Gallic charms have helped it prosper despite tough competition from nearby attractions, museums, and Paris' own notable icons.

Funworld spoke with CEO Delphine Pons about the park's challenges, triumphs, and future during a milestone year.

Living Legends

Pons knows she is "lucky" to have such a lively and legendary universe to play with. The attraction's values of humor, friendship, irreverence, and authenticity have brought more than 52 million visitors to Parc Astérix over 35 years. "It's an inspiration for us. It's also a responsibility," she says. "We work in close partnership with the license owners, and we respect the heritage of René Goscinny and Albert Uderzo."

The Astérix universe gives Parc Astérix's team plenty of characters to draw from, including the Gauls, Romans, Egyptians, and Pirates. The park also features Greek and Viking lands. New Astérix comic book volumes are added every two years. There are also movies, and Netflix is expected to premiere a new series, "Astérix & Obélix: Le Combat Des Chefs," in 2025.

Parc Astérix's owner, French leisure group Compagnie des Alpes (CdA), is pursuing an investment plan that builds on the Astérix intellectual property (IP), increases Parc Astérix's attractiveness and capacity, and maximizes its appeal as a global tourism destination.



S. CAMBON

Various views of Festival Toutatis reveal a heavily themed, immersive environment.



S. CAMBON



S. CAMBON

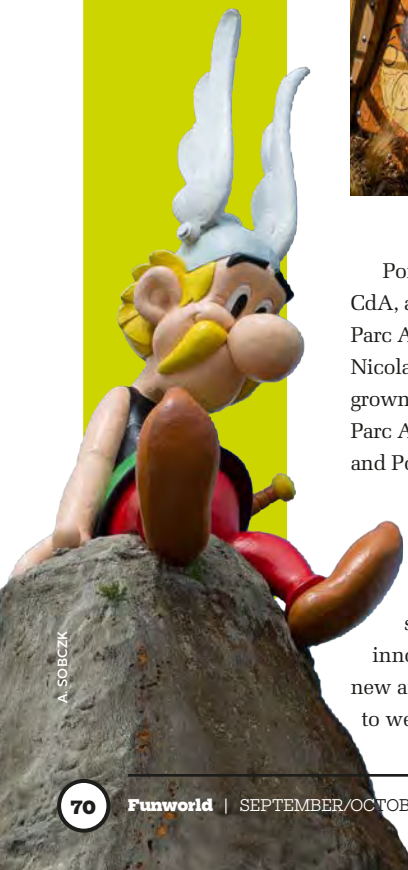
Pons joined the park in May 2021 after a 16-year career at C&A, and she had reason to be optimistic about her new post. Parc Astérix was about to reopen after lockdown. Her predecessor, Nicolas Kremer, had left the park in good shape. Attendance had grown from fewer than 1.7 million in 2014 to 2.3 million in 2019. Parc Asterix had come to the end of a 10-year development plan, and Pons had an opportunity to map out a future master plan.

Aiming for Guest Satisfaction

“Our main objective is to provide our guests with what we call ‘la très grande satisfaction’—great satisfaction,” she says. “We know our visitors are sensitive to novelties, innovation, and modernity. So, year after year, we will develop new attractions, shows, restaurants, and accommodation capacity to welcome them.”

The €36 million Festival Toutatis zone, which opened last year, embodies those ambitions. The team wanted to create a signature “thrill coaster” that was unlike any other ride in the park. Toutatis, from Intamin, features seven LSM launches: five forward and two backward. The multi-launch coaster has 23 moments of airtime. “It’s very speedy, but it’s also accessible because it’s really smooth and comfortable,” Pons says. Riders hit 107 kph along the 1,100-meter track.

Toutatis runs three 20-seat trains, ensuring maximum capacity. An intricately themed ride station, buried beneath



A. SOBCEK

a green hill covered in menhir standing stones and prehistoric monuments, is adorned with tribal carvings. Dynamic lights embedded into the rockwork enhance the anticipation.

"Each time we create something in Parc Astérix, it should be immersive and in the Asterix and Obélix DNA," Pons says. "We first think about the story we want to tell our guests." Toutatis is themed around the idea that the Gauls have created a festival to honor their god, Toutatis.

Pons and her team are not afraid to rewrite their plans as opportunities arise. "We dare to change things," she says. As the Toutatis storyline evolved, they saw the potential to create an entire themed area. Besides the new roller coaster, the 3-hectare Festival Toutatis zone includes L'aire De Jeux Du Sanglier D'or (The Golden Boar Playground), the family-friendly Chez Gyrofolix attraction, a

food and beverage (F&B) outlet named Au Dolmen Gourmand Restaurant, and a gift shop alongside the existing La Trace Du Hourra bobsleigh ride. "What we want to do in the master plan is to have full areas where our guests will find everything they want for all the family," Pons says.

The new area has improved flow management, increased capacity, and helped the team better manage waiting times. "It's brought additional visitors," Pons adds.

Park attendance climbed from 2.6 million visitors in 2022 to 2.8 million in 2023. Although that's not solely due to the new development, the "Toutatis effect" played a part.

Offering Unique Experiences

Festival Toutatis is designed for nighttime and winter openings and events as the facility stretches its operating calendar. The park wants to extend its opening days from 200 to 250 days a year within a decade.

"Parc Astérix is different according to the season," Pons says, which creates the urge to visit at varying times. Springtime marks the launch of new attractions. During the Gaulish Summer (L'Été Gaulois), guests can enjoy the nighttime ambiance in the park, which is open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Visitors can feast and party with Astérix and Obélix at a Gaulish Banquet.

Toutatis, an Intamin creation, disembarks the platform for a 110 km/h two minute ride.



PARC ASTÉRIX



VINCENT LANSIAUX

Peur sur le Parc (Fear on the Park) provides Halloween entertainment with haunted houses, scare zones, monsters, and a “terrifying buffet” called Le buffet de l’horreur. Families can visit in the daytime, whereas a scarier experience runs from 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. Parc Astérix’s Gaulish Christmas (Noël Gaulois) offers ice skating, a garden trail with illuminated Chinese lanterns, parades, shows, and specialty F&B.

The park marks its 35th anniversary in 2024 with new attractions, including a specially composed musical, “C’est du Délire,” a Spanish float for the Gaulish Parade, a 40-meter-high La Tour de Numérobis swing ride for the Egyptian land, and an F&B outlet named P’OZ Kebab. There’s also the newly rethemed La Revanche des Pirates flume ride (formerly Le Grand Splash).

Investing in a Green Future

The team is renovating aging park infrastructure to enhance the visitor experience. All projects are designed with sustainability in mind. Parc Astérix is nestled in a forest surrounded by a protected natural area. As the park grows, the design team at CdA strives to develop the park with minimal impact on biodiversity.

Parc Astérix’s goal is to reach net zero carbon emissions in 2030. The facility uses 100% green electricity from renewable sources. The park also plans to have a solar carport and is replacing its work vehicles with ones that run on electricity or biofuel. A key challenge is to improve accessibility to ensure more people arrive by public transport.

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Themed accommodation is another area of growth for the park. Parc Astérix started with the 100-room Hôtel des Trois Hiboux and expanded with 50 new rooms and a seminar and convention center. Two further hotels followed: La Cité Suspendue and Les Quais de Lutèce, Parc Astérix's first four-star themed hotel, which opened in 2020. The 150-room Les Quais de Lutèce hotel takes guests back to 50 B.C., when Astérix is set, recreating period buildings around the River Seine.


Work will soon start on a fourth hotel, which is expected to open at the end of 2026 or the beginning of 2027. Theming inside the 300-room hotel and convention center will reflect the Astérix and Obélix universe.

A project director steers each development, but Pons believes in integrating teams for the best results. "I want hotel staff to be fully involved. I don't want the operations and maintenance teams telling me, 'The hotel is nice, but it's impossible operationally.'"

Pons is as determined to invest in Parc Astérix's people as she is in front-of-house experiences. "We have to invest for our visitors, but we also have to invest for our



staff." She is investing to build and renovate backstage facilities. "We care about the staff and their quality of life at work," she says. Staff who are comfortable will be in "a better mindset to make our visitors happy."

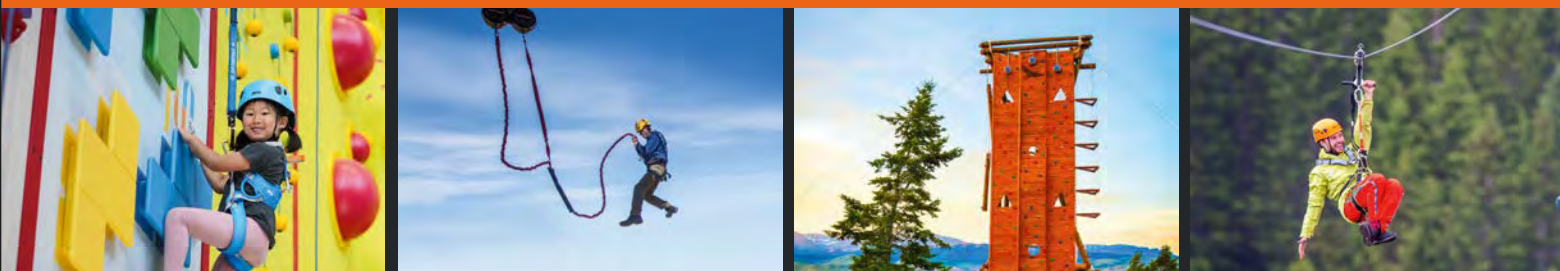
Pons is inspired by what she sees in the wider industry. "We are in a growing market. Each year, there are more visitors to leisure parks." Players are announcing major development plans to increase market share, which she says is good for customers and lifts the whole industry. "It's a win-win situation for everyone." 

The C'est Du Délire! Parade is an offering of Parc Astérix's Gaulish Christmas event.

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EST. 1980



Funworld's annual look at what's new across the globe

Intro by Michael Costello

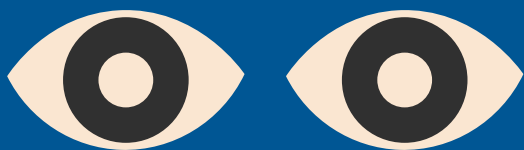
PICTURE THIS: With the wind in guests' hair, a musical score echoes in the background, and the smell of a pinewood forest wafts in the air. Guests pass through a neon lit tube or stone tunnel before launching up into the air, rolling back, and making a splash-down into a shimmering pool. Meanwhile, explorers step back to a time thousands of years ago when giant beasts roamed the earth before entering into the scenes of their favorite movies. From Never Land to Antarctica, from the lands of dragons to the world of a loveable childhood dog, or the setting of the family Thanksgiving dinner, guests experience the escapism, thrills, and adventure while making memories that keep turnstiles spinning.

The skill of engineers and creativity of the most imaginative minds on the planet spent the past year conjuring up experiences that exemplify what our industry does best: creating joy and wonder for the 300 million guests who visit attractions annually.

Funworld's 2024 New Attractions Round-Up chronicles the new attractions that brought guests to IAAPA-member facilities in record-breaking numbers.

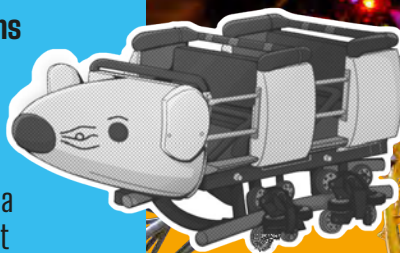


NEW RIDES & ATTRACTIONS 2024



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FUN IN THE DARK

by Juliana Gilling



Cadbury Chocolate Quest

Cadbury World, Bournville, United Kingdom

Merlin Magic Making, Alterface, ETF Ride Systems, 1050 Studio, WT Partnership, Mondelez International

ALTERFACE



Cadbury Chocolate Quest is Cadbury World's sweet new centerpiece. The interactive dark ride, part of Merlin Entertainments' £8 million investment in the attraction, reflects the company's larger ambitions for Cadbury World's future.

Tim Waters, regional director at Merlin Entertainments, says the company made an "investment strategy" to roll out Cadbury Chocolate Quest, the newly opened interactive Have a Go Zone, and the completely revamped Bournville Experience in the same season.

As a branded attraction, guests join Freddo the frog and the mischievous Buttons monkeys on a quest to find the perfect ingredients for a Cadbury Dairy Milk chocolate bar. Riders wield "Cadbury Collectors" to gather raw ingredients, including cocoa pods and milk, before catching the Bournville steam train to the Cadbury factory to whip up delicious treats.

"Creating a great interactive dark ride is very much like making delicious chocolate," says Stephane Battaille, CEO at media-based interactive attractions company Alterface. "It requires the right team and ingredients."

Nine ETF Multi Mover trackless vehicles can accommodate 600 guests per hour. Multimedia screens, six interactive scenes, animations, animatronic elements, and atmospheric effects enhance the experience.

Alterface worked with Merlin to make the ride inclusive. Special armrests on seats allow easier access, and one of the cars has a wheelchair-compatible design. Subtitles are shown on all screens.

cadburyworld.co.uk/explore/attractions/cadbury-chocolate-quest/

Dämonen Gruft

Heide Park Resort, Soltau, Germany

Merlin Entertainments, Alterface, Preston & Barbieri, Oddities, 400 Coups, Pachinko Media, JP Show Systems, TAA Group

HEIDE PARK RESORT/MERLIN ENTERTAINMENTS



Daredevils can descend into the Dämonen Gruft (Demon's Crypt), discovered during excavations at Heide Park Resort, despite dire warnings and rumors of people disappearing. Passengers set off in mine carts into the ancient catacombs, where monstrous creatures lurk in the dark.

The compact, 380-square-meter dark ride designed by Merlin Entertainments' team and produced by Alterface blends scary stories with scenery, embedded media, animatronics, and sensory effects to spook guests. Eight cars carry four souls through the 3.5-minute ride, providing a maximum capacity of 480 passengers per hour. One of the most impressive scenes, featuring a Pepper's ghost scrim, video, theming, scents, water jets, immersive sound, and lighting, reveals the giant-headed demon that stalks riders.

Marketing Director George Hope shares with Funworld why Heide Park knew it was time to add a dark ride.

"A scary dark ride met the demand for a thrilling attraction and it seamlessly integrated into our Transylvanian land," says Hope. "The Dämonen Gruft revitalized an abandoned building, breathing new life into the space. The story aligns perfectly with the Flight of the Demons ride, enhancing our guests' immersive experience. As an indoor attraction, it also provides an excellent option for rainy days."

heide-park.de/en/daemonengruft/

Dino Off Road Adventure

Six Flags Over Texas Arlington, Texas, United States

Six Flags Over Texas is bringing the past back to life in 2024 by revitalizing a classic ride. The park has reimagined its vintage Chaparral Antique Cars, which debuted in 1962, as Dino Off Road Adventure.

Families will journey past 15 life-size dinosaur animatronics, including a Tyrannosaurus rex, three Velociraptors, and a Stegosaurus. Sound effects add to the roar-some experience. A fleet of 14 adventure-ready, four-person vehicles takes riders along the 1,470-foot outdoor track.

sixflags.com/overtexas/attractions/dino-off-road-adventure-2



SIX FLAGS OVER TEXAS

Fire In The Hole

Silver Dollar City, Branson, Missouri, United States
Rocky Mountain Construction

Silver Dollar City transports guests back to the 1880s with a remake of a park classic: Fire In The Hole, an attraction that's part dark ride and part roller coaster. This nearly three-minute adventure—created in collaboration with Rocky Mountain Construction (RMC)—takes riders on a thrilling mission to save a burning town from vigilantes named, The Baldknobbers. Set within a new 32,000-square-foot structure, the coaster offers 14 immersive show scenes and three gravity-defying drops, culminating in a water-splash finale (a fan favorite from the original).

On the new-for-2024 version, riders board new vehicles styled to resemble an 1880s steam-powered firefighting wagon, before plunging into historical storytelling thanks to an immersive experience that retells the fiery history of the Ozark town of Marmaros. “The ride combines a family coaster experience all can enjoy with indoor elements illustrating the history of this area,” notes Duane Marden, founder of the Roller Coaster Database. With its impressive scale, engaging theming, and thrilling ride elements, the new Fire In The Hole ignites excitement that's on track to again become the park's signature family attraction.

silverdollarcity.com/theme-park/attractions/rides/new-fire-in-the-hole/



SILVER DOLLAR CITY



PURSUIT



FlyOver Chicago

Navy Pier, Chicago, United States
FlyOver by Pursuit, Brogent

Aboard Chicago's new FlyOver attraction, guests can feel the wind in their hair as they fly through the Windy City. "FlyOver is our love letter to Chicago," says Lisa Adams, COO and executive producer of FlyOver Attractions by Pursuit.

The flying theater sends guests on an exhilarating trip through the city from day to night. They will flit past iconic landmarks, including the Tribune Tower and the Cloud Gate sculpture at Millennium Park. Riders will witness the Joffrey Ballet rehearsing, see inside the Chicago Theatre, swoop past Chicago's diverse neighborhoods, and watch dazzling fireworks over Navy Pier. A stirring soundtrack accompanies specially shot drone footage, which plays across a 65-foot spherical screen. Onboard effects stimulate all the senses.

FlyOver Chicago transports 61 guests at a time and includes pre-show entertainment (pictured left). It is the fourth FlyOver attraction by hospitality company Pursuit, while Brogent delivered the ride system.

experienceflyover.com/chicago/

HickHack um die Harzburg

BurgBergCenter, Bad Harzburg, Germany
Attraktion!

ATTRAKTION!



HickHack um die Harzburg is HarzVenture's first indoor ride and joins a cable car, zipline, adventure golf, and treetop walk at its tourist attraction in the Harz mountains. The indoor ride provides an entertaining alternative for guests during poor weather.

HickHack um die Harzburg's storyline is based on a comic book inspired by local history. The ride tells the story of King Heinrich IV and his animal friends, the magical owl Naira, and Naapi the salamander, who are in the Harz castle when an angry bishop and duke attack it. Audiences follow King Heinrich as he escapes the castle, ziplines through a forest, and turns his foes' catapult against them.

Attraktion! served as the turnkey provider for the attraction. The ride uses its Circulum 360 ride system, which combines a 3DOF motion platform with rotation and immersive 360-degree projection. "This dark ride version, with multiple sets, is perfect for small venues, museums, or local tourist attractions," says Daniel Teubenbacher, head of creative and European sales at Attraktion!

The ride has 16 seats and one wheelchair space. Guests spend 17 minutes in the experience; the main show lasts nine minutes in a 58-square-meter space. The pre-show area doubles as an events space that places guests in a forest setting in front of the castle, with a digital castle window, projections, and scent effects as all a part of the show.

darkridatabase.com/rides/hickhack-um-die-harzburg/

SpongeBob's Crazy Carnival Ride

Circus Circus Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, United States
Sally Dark Rides



SpongeBob SquarePants celebrates his 25th birthday with an uproarious adventure at the Circus Circus Hotel & Casino. SpongeBob's Crazy Carnival Ride, the first installation of a SpongeBob SquarePants-themed interactive dark ride, immerses guests in the vibrant undersea world of Bikini Bottom, where they meet SpongeBob and his friends.

The family experience emerged from a powerful partnership among Paramount, Nickelodeon, and Circus Circus. Sally Dark Rides created the ride, which sees SpongeBob and Patrick delivering boxes of balls for Mr. Krabs' latest get-rich scheme—midway games.

“As a lifelong fan and ride designer, working with the SpongeBob SquarePants IP (intellectual property) was a dream come true,” says Rich Hill, chief creative officer at Sally Dark Rides.

Sally has crammed plenty of hijinks into just over 6,000 square feet of ride space. The show lasts around 20 minutes, including the pre-show set-up and seven-minute interactive ride experience. The ride combines six of Sally's animatronics with 15 brightly colored scenes, five-passenger “Carnival Carts,” multimedia projections, special effects, and original voice talent to bring the iconic SpongeBob characters to life in a new way.

A second installment of SpongeBob's Crazy Carnival Ride is projected to open at The Land of Legends in Türkiye by 2025.

sallydarkrides.com/dark-rides/spongebobs-crazy-carnival-ride



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Tiki-Tahiti Adventure

Tier- und Freizeitpark Thüle, Friesoythe, Germany
Aufwind Group - Creative Solutions

Tiki-Tahiti Adventure is the crowning glory of the Tiki-themed area at Tier- und Freizeitpark Thüle. Guests join an eccentric professor as he searches for the legendary Tiki-Tahiti treasure, but their flight crashes in the jungle. Soon, the adventurers are chasing after Tiki-Tahiti folk, hurtling along in mine carts, swimming with dolphins, and getting a royal welcome from the Tiki-Tahiti king, who reminds them that true treasure is the joy found in life.

Tiki-Tahiti Adventure features four vehicles (expandable to five or six) with 3DOF motion, each seating four riders. The dynamic dark ride uses advanced projection systems with 90- and 180-degree curved screens, media content produced by CMC Engineers GmbH, and synchronized audio-visual and sensory effects along a 42-meter track. Pre-show rooms, including a professor's library with a secret door and a jungle campsite beneath the stars, introduce visitors to the storyline. UV effects and projections create an enveloping visual experience.

Lutz Bayer, managing director at Aufwind Group - Creative Solutions, sees stronger storylines blended with technology as the future of dark rides. "Technological innovation—including advanced motion systems—AI, and real-time interaction is paving the way for more dynamic and responsive ride experiences," he adds.

tier-freizeitpark.de/neuigkeiten/bau-der-neuen-attraktion-hat-begonnen/

DOF ROBOTICS



Werika Flying Theater

JAPI (Trompo Mágico Museum), Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico
DOF Robotics

In the Werika Flying Theater from DOF Robotics, audiences can see the cultural riches of the Mexican state of Jalisco from a fresh perspective. The flying theater's platforms gently levitate up to 40 guests toward a 14-meter-high domed screen, sending them soaring through captivating landscapes and thrilling scenarios.

DOF Robotics' flight experience combines a 6DOF motion simulation and projection system, enhanced by virtual reality. Wind, rain, and scent effects add to the movie's realism.

"We are committed to pushing the boundaries of immersive entertainment, and this attraction exemplifies our dedication to innovation and excellence," says DOF Robotics CEO Bakit Baydaliev, who adds guests will feel "as if they are truly flying."



Wolf Legend

Gardaland Resort, Castelnuovo del Garda, Italy
Merlin Magic Making, SBF Visa Group, Parolini, Panel System,
Poliscultura, Studio Adami & Zeni, Simach

Gardaland's vertical dark ride, Wolf Legend, is set to be a howling success. The Merlin Magic Making team has created the story of a magnificent wolf turned to stone after being cursed, and visitors are challenged to break the spell by bravely entering the beast's gaping 16-meter-high jaws. The heroes board a 16-seat gondola and rise to the ride's highest point, 25 meters above the park, before plunging into the wolf's jaws. Chanting sound effects and smoke effects accompany them. Glittering symbols and lighting effects illuminate the wolf's head. The purple Drop & Twist Tower repeatedly raises, rotates, and drops thrill seekers. Wolf Legend handles 360 people per hour, ensuring a memorable and efficient experience for visitors of different ages. The minimum height requirement is 105 centimeters.

"Gardaland aims to capture the imagination and excitement of multiple generations," says Gardaland sales and marketing director Luca Marigo. "This investment is part of Gardaland's strategy to strengthen its position as a leading European tourist destination and consolidate its status as a top player in the family entertainment industry."

gardaland.it/en/explore-gardaland/gardaland-park/rides/wolf-legend/



Anna and Elsa's Frozen Journey, Rapunzel's Lantern Festival, Peter Pan's Never Land Adventure, and Fairy Tinker Bell's Busy Buggies

Tokyo DisneySea, Urayasu, Chiba, Japan
Oriental Land Co., Ltd.

Oriental Land Co., Ltd. has developed marvelous rides for Fantasy Springs, the themed port that opened this year at Tokyo DisneySea. The dark rides are prominent in the three newly opened themed lands inspired by the films "Frozen," "Tangled," and "Peter Pan."

Anna and Elsa's Frozen Journey is a spectacular retelling of the hit movie. Guests take a royal tour through Arendelle's palace before boarding boats to drift past momentous moments in Anna and Elsa's lives. The 6.5-minute ride is a technological masterpiece featuring lavish sets, animatronics, projections, and iconic songs,

including "Do You Want to Build a Snowman?" and "Let It Go."

Rapunzel's Lantern Festival is a romantic boat trip that recreates Rapunzel's "best day ever" after she escapes her tower and falls for Flynn Rider.

In Peter Pan's Never Land Adventure, riders help Peter Pan, the Lost Kids, and Tinker Bell save the day when Captain Hook and his pirates snatch John. Riders soar through the sky above Neverland and watch Peter Pan and his friends outwit Captain Hook before whisking Wendy and her brothers safely back home. The six-minute ride uses 3D technology and practical sets to immerse guests in the action. For smaller guests, Fairy Tinker Bell's Busy Buggies offers an outdoor tracked ride through the magical kingdom of Pixie Hollow, where flowers and fauna are larger than life.

tokyodisneyresort.jp/special/en/fantasysprings/



TONY GARCIA



4D Magic Cinema

Morgan's Wonderland, San Antonio, Texas, United States
SimEx-Iwerks

Morgan's Wonderland, an accessibility-focused theme park in San Antonio, provides attractions for children with all levels of ability. In 2024, the park partnered with SimEx-Iwerks Entertainment to create a new experience.

"Our 4D motion ride experience, named Mars Coaster, features motion, wind, and water elements that recreate the thrills experienced on a roller coaster for our guests," says Entertainment Manager Matthew Cassi.

Mars Coaster is the first cinematic experience at Morgan's Wonderland's 4D Magic Cinema. The ride has already welcomed tens of thousands of guests since opening in March. Actuators deliver motion effects similar to a roller coaster, and a special platform allows guests in wheelchairs to experience these same effects. Riders can also turn off motion effects if they prefer.

Cassi adds the Texas weather played a role in adding a new indoor attraction. "Not only is it the first cinematic offering in the park, it's also another great way to cool down from the Texas heat."

morganswonderland.org/attraction/4d-cinema/

GEORGIA AQUARIUM



Destination: Dolphin

Georgia Aquarium, Atlanta, Georgia, United States

Just in time for summer visitors, Georgia Aquarium refreshed and enhanced its dolphin show with a new presentation named Destination: Dolphin.

Show developers knew having a splash zone would remain a crowd pleaser from previous presentations, so they programmed the new show to take an even deeper dive into dolphin traits, behaviors, conservation efforts, and their connection to humans.

"Destination: Dolphin provides even more insight into dolphins as a species, how you can respect and conserve them, and also showcases their energy, athleticism, and agility through high-energy behaviors and interactions with trainers," says Dan Dipiazzo, chief marketing and experience officer at Georgia Aquarium.

Music, lighting, and effects in the aquarium's 1,800-person theater add to the show's entertainment appeal.

georgiaaquarium.org/experience/dolphin-presentation/



Detective Conan 4-D Live Show: Jewel Under the Starry Sky

Universal Studios Japan, Osaka, Japan
Universal Creative, ShoPro, TMS Entertainment

Blending live action, special effects, and 3D imagery across massive screens places guests in the middle of an original story at Universal Studios Japan. The new Detective Conan 4-D Live Show: Jewel Under the Starry Sky features actors and technical wizardry where the world of anime and manga come together. The entertainment team at USJ worked with publisher Shogakukan, production company ShoPro, animation studio TMS Entertainment, and Detective Conan's creator, Gosho Aoyama.

"It all starts with the creation of a compelling story," says Dan Mitchell with Universal Studios Japan, who adds the production team faced some unique challenges, such as language considerations as Universal Studios Japan welcomes audiences from across the globe. "Within our multi-cultural entertainment team, we actually have our own microcosm of these varying IP awareness levels—as well as our own language considerations—so we lean into this in a way that acts as an internal check to help guide our development to create something that works on multiple levels for a wide audience."

usj.co.jp/web/en/us/events/conan-2024



Disney Dreams That Soar

Disney Springs, Walt Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, Florida, United States
Disney Live Entertainment

From "Peter Pan" to "Pete's Dragon," many beloved Disney movies take to the skies above Disney Springs. Realizing this, the team at Walt Disney World took their imagination to new heights, using 800 drones to light up the night sky above Disney Springs. Disney Dreams That Soar debuted in May, becoming the resort's first fully realized show using only drones.

"While many people have seen drones in online videos, very few people have actually experienced a drone show in person," says David Duffy, vice president of Disney Live Entertainment at Walt Disney World. "To watch people gasp as they see the drones fill the sky and magically transform into their favorite characters really makes all the team's hard work worth it."

Baymax from Disney's "Big Hero 6," the Death Star from Lucasfilm's "Star Wars," and Buzz Lightyear from Pixar's "Toy Story" are just a few of the characters featured. When the drones align, some of the lighted figures measure more than 400 feet tall.

disneysprings.com/entertainment/disney-dreams-that-soar/



LEGOLAND



Lego World Parade

Legoland California Resort, Carlsbad, California, United States

At Legoland California Resort's Lego World Parade, floats like a red Lego City Firetruck, a swashbuckling pirate ship, and those inspired by Lego Ninjago, Lego City Deep Sea Adventure and Duplo dazzled guests of all ages from its opening in May.

When planning the new parade, park president Kurt Stocks says the entertainment team identified the most popular Lego entities already found at the property. They then programmed a ensemble of Lego characters to be part of the parade and hired more than 50 performers who are instructed to "captivate the audience." A new Lego World Parade soundtrack was composed exclusively for use during the parade that takes place on the west side of the park.

"We also have show-stopping moments to give opportunities for families to jump in and join the party," Stocks says.

legoland.com/california/things-to-do/seasonal-events/lego-world-parade/

WALT DISNEY WORLD



Luminous: The Symphony of Us

Epcot, Walt Disney World, Bay Lake, Florida, United States

Using a combination of classic and modern Disney songs, original music, fireworks, fountains, narration, and lights, Luminous: The Symphony of Us wows guests at Epcot's World Showcase Lagoon.

Producers designed the new show to serve as a bow of sorts to wrap up a day spent at Epcot.

"We wanted to deliver an experience that's intrinsically connected to the overall themes and philosophy of Epcot that could serve as a perfect conclusion to a day spent in the park," says Kartika Rodriguez, vice president of Epcot. "The Disney Live Entertainment creative team behind Luminous: The Symphony of Us did just that, honoring Epcot as a place that invites connections, where people and cultures can come together and share their stories."

Narration, stirring music, and stunning visuals weave together a story about our shared humanity across cultures.

disneyworld.disney.go.com/entertainment/epcot/luminous-the-symphony-us/



Behold Luminous: The Symphony of Us

See the show as part of IAAPA Celebrates during IAAPA Expo. Learn more and secure tickets at IAAPA.org/Celebrates



Viola's Room

Punchdrunk, London, United Kingdom

Based on a Victorian gothic horror story called "The Moonslave," Viola's Room is Punchdrunk's newest immersive experience and features audio narration by award-winning actor Helena Bonham Carter.

Guided by light and sound, guests explore a dimly lit bedroom and other spaces wearing headsets and missing something else: their shoes. Navigating the sets of Viola's Room is experienced barefoot.

"We're asking audiences to step into the dark and let us take their hands on a journey. What's exciting for us is the opportunity to tell a tale from beginning to end, to distill what we love about sensory experiences into a compact design installation with a spine-tingling story at its core," says Hector Harkness, co-director of the piece.

Participants are encouraged to piece together the story as they wander at will through different environments while they pick up visual and audio cues in their headsets.

"In Viola's Room, you'll flow through a story, beat by beat, riding the wave of it," Harkness adds.

punchdrunk.com/work/violas-room/



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DEUTSCHLANDMUSEUM

Deutschlandmuseum

Berlin, Germany

Creative Studio Berlin, Bentin Projects

After a design and construction phase held at a breakneck pace, Berlin's Deutschlandmuseum went from concept to award-winning reality in eight months. Robert Rückel, the German history museum's executive director, tells Funworld that his goal was "to rethink what a museum could be, creating an environment where history is not only told, but experienced in a truly immersive way." The museum's design and execution also appeals to a broader audience than such institutions typically attract, using "techniques such as content reduction, storytelling, and innovative design ... in this regard, we see ourselves as the gateway to the museum world."

Deutschlandmuseum presents a 2,000-year sweep of German history. Creative Studio Berlin Creative Director and owner Chris Lange and his "small but very experienced team" chose to divide the historical periods into 12 chapters. Rückel tells Funworld that "seven of these spaces are completely immersive," using reproduced historic spaces, including a print shop from the era

of Gutenberg, where "walls, ceiling, and floor [are] all perfectly themed, with smell and background noise" rounding out the 15th century experience.

The complexity of each of the museum's 12 chapters required sophisticated technical expertise. Benedikt Koch, the project's technical supervisor at Bentin Projects, designed the installation of Deutschlandmuseum's audio, light, and video equipment choices, integrating "all crafts and challenges, such as room height, Pepper's ghost effects, and multi-angle projection mapping" to make each area come alive as vividly as possible. The technical elements work in tandem with historical artifacts and brief, engaging text. This fully integrated approach has delivered on Rückel's vision of "offering a comprehensive overview that can be absorbed in about an hour" by visitors of all ages and education levels.

deutschlandmuseum.de/en/



Islands of the Rising Sun and Nemo, Ocean Splendor

Pairi Daiza, Cambron, Belgium

EventCom, Dreamwall Media Solutions, Grand les Yeux, Hovertone

Belgium's Pairi Daiza zoo and botanical garden outdid itself in 2024 by opening its latest world, Islands of the Rising Sun. In addition, the attraction marked its 30th anniversary with a new LED lights installation titled Nemo, Ocean Splendor. The massive, conservation-focused park, built on the grounds of a former Cistercian Abbey in Cambron, Belgium, is home to more than 7,500 animals living in one of nine region-specific worlds. According to Pairi Daiza spokesperson Johan Vreys, within Islands of the Rising Sun, "Japan will be represented in the form of islands," featuring reproductions of the varied landscapes, flora, and fauna on Hokkaido, Honshu, and Kishu in Japan. Vreys also shares with Funworld that "with the exception of two monumental sculptures, nearly all of the scenery for Islands of the Rising Sun was created and built in-house."

To plan, build, and execute Nemo, Ocean Splendor, however, the landmark zoo and conservation park commissioned technological contributions from four Belgian partner companies: EventCom, Dreamwall Media Solutions, Grand les Yeux, and

Hovertone. The permanent installation is a 137-meter screen illuminated by 18.9 million LEDs, all mounted on the exterior of the neoclassical castle that holds the park's aquarium.

Hovertone CEO Joëlle Tilmanne explains that the oceanic installation is "a unique immersive experience that plunges visitors into an interactive and evolving marine universe." By making the technology responsive to visitors' presences and movements, the installation transforms them into "active participants in a 'living' world, instead of [looking at] a repetitive video loop," Grand les Yeux Artistic Director Daphné Cornez explains.

Thomas Richard, director of EventCom, is particularly proud of "the perfect integration of the thousands of high-tech components on the castle's facade," further explaining that the impressively "meticulous work [is] almost unnoticed by the visitors and the thousands of fish" living in the aquarium.

pairidaiza.eu/



PADDINGTON BEAR EXPERIENCE



The Paddington Bear Experience

County Hall, London, United Kingdom
Autograph Sound

Imagine walking down the street depicted above where a cast of actors guide visitors of all ages, generations, and sensory needs through locations from the classic Paddington Bear stories and film franchise. The 70-minute attraction features vivid, immersive scenes of Paddington Station, the Brown family's Windsor Gardens neighborhood, and the Peruvian jungle.

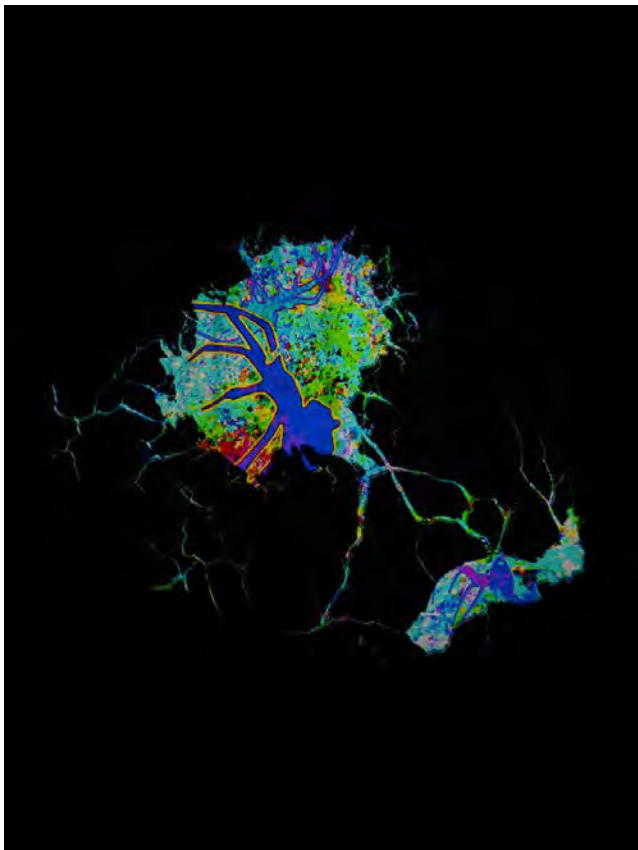
The multi-environment attraction—which culminates in a delicious-smelling marmalade festival where guests have the option to add an extra hour to their 70-minute tour—opened in 2023 at County Hall, an historic building on London's Southbank. Julia Posen of Path Entertainment Group shared that The Paddington Bear Experience was built with internal expectations “to create the greatest licensed family entertainment experience in the world and put it in one of the most iconic buildings in London, whilst always maintaining the brand ethos of ensuring everything we do is done with kindness, generosity, and understanding.”

Sound design by Luke Swaffield, of Autograph, was a key ingredient in ensuring that the attraction met Path Entertainment

Group's expectations, providing both an immersive experience for guests and critical cues to the actors who lead “audience members entering the experience every 7.5 minutes.” To create and maintain the necessary degree of precision, The Paddington Bear Experience uses approximately 200 hidden individually driven speakers, mostly from British manufacturer Martin Audio, and Adorn ceiling/pendant loudspeakers. Swaffield credits colleagues Rebecca Brower and Ryan O'Connor with “finding ways to disguise the loudspeakers in the experience,” a task made easier thanks to the “small form factor and unwise dispersion pattern” in Martin Audio's CDD (constant directivity device) range, which makes them effective even when hidden away in corners.

As a final visual flourish, Posen highlighted that borrowing original film props and set dressings from StudioCanal lent “an additional layer of detail and authenticity” to The Paddington Bear Experience.

paddingtonbearexperience.com



Unextinct

Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, Columbus, Ohio, United States
Mangolin Creative

Columbus Zoo and Aquarium is always looking to Ohio's borders and beyond to entice more visitors to appreciate their conservation-driven mission. According to the zoo's Vice President of Water Park Operations and Guest Services Anthony Sabo, the Unextinct nighttime immersive experience immediately ticked all the zoo's boxes. The zoo set the goal to attract visitors from neighboring states and provide education to guests on the reasons animals go extinct.

The experience brought more than 70 extinct and threatened species back to life using tech-driven theatrical illusions in 15 different themed scenes, each with an original musical soundtrack. The exhibit was a production of Los Angeles-based design studio Mangolin Creative, in partnership with SSA Ventures.

Using the zoo's existing layout and existing infrastructure—including an underground tunnel, a pond, and the "meandering pathways" of its Asia Quest area—Mangolin co-founder and Creative Director Morgan Lee Richardson tells Funworld that planners were able to deploy "sophisticated projection mapping, hydro screens, show lighting, theatrical scrim, and other creative technologies," with a result that balanced inspiration, education, and entertainment.

mangolincreative.com

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ROBERT CORNELLIER



Bobcat

Six Flags Great Escape, Lake George, NY
Gravitykraft Corporation

In keeping with Six Flags Great Escape's commitment to family-friendly entertainment, the new Bobcat roller coaster adds a sixth coaster to the park in celebration of its 70th anniversary. The Bobcat reaches speeds of up to 40 mph and features a 55.4-foot height, with airtime elements on 1,412-foot track. A product of Gravity Group, Bobcat runs bobcat-themed, articulated, Timberliner trains that debuted on the trade show floor of IAAPA Expo 2023 in Orlando.



Coaster Adventures

Happy Valley Park, Shenzhen, China
Jinma Rides

The new spinning coaster at Shenzhen Happy Valley, named Coaster Adventures, is inspired by the popular Chinese computer game Mini World. This innovative coaster from Jinma Rides combines the power of two linear synchronous motor (LSM) launches with the playful sensation of spinning trains. Coupled with thrilling track elements such as multiple weightless moments, S-turns, major dives, and spiral loops, the coaster delivers an exhilarating experience.

Despite its thrilling elements, the coaster's zero inversions make it accessible to riders of all ages. With a height requirement of 1.2 meters, families can experience the joy of this coaster together. Spanning 610 meters of track, this family-friendly coaster reaches speeds of up to 64 kph and immerses riders in a whimsical world during the 130-second adventure. Officially opened on May 1, Coaster Adventures seamlessly integrates into the park's terrain and enhances the guest experience with its smooth, quiet ride and visually captivating trains.



Good Gravy!

Holiday World, Santa Claus, Indiana, United States
Vekoma

Holiday World in Santa Claus, Indiana, dishes up a delightful, 65-second family adventure with Good Gravy! This Vekoma boomerang coaster, which debuted May 4, sends guests on a hilarious mission, taking them on a 1,500-foot wild ride to save Thanksgiving dinner. Riders board adorable gravy boat trains, propelled backward up the lift hill before blasting through the station at 37 mph. They dodge outsized kitchen menaces like a 20-foot whisk and a giant cranberry sauce can, culminating in a soaring 77-foot spike. Riders repeat the journey backwards, ensuring everyone gets a second helping of thrills. The charming queue, designed by Holiday World's creative team, transports guests to Grandma Gracy's house, brimming with nostalgic Thanksgiving décor. With a gentle speed and a 38-inch height requirement, Good Gravy! serves up the perfect portion of fun for families seeking an accessible coaster experience. It's a delicious recipe for theme park success, proving that storytelling and thrills can create a memorable ride for all ages.

holidayworld.com/rides/good-gravy/



Loch Ness Monster: The Legend Lives On

Busch Gardens Williamsburg, Williamsburg, Virginia, United States
Premier Rides

Busch Gardens Williamsburg brought its iconic Loch Ness Monster back to life in 2024. As one of the world's first interlocking looping coasters, the classic ride now features more than 900 feet of retracked steel (as part of the ride's 3,240-feet of original track) thanks to Premier Rides. As riders again journey through the Scottish Highlands along the new track, they encounter the same breathtaking drops and turns, now enhanced with a shadowy encounter with the famed monster itself—set against the backdrop of a new custom soundtrack and updated theming.

"For several decades, Loch Ness Monster has been a fan-favorite attraction for millions of guests," says Kevin Lembke, president of Busch Gardens Williamsburg. "With a 48-inch height requirement, the whole family can make memories together while conquering Loch Ness Monster: The Legend Lives On."

Reaching speeds up to 60 mph, the updated coaster still boasts iconic features like its two interlocking loops and a dramatic drop over the park's central river, as first created by Arrow Dynamics in 1978. Recognized as an historical landmark by the American Coaster Enthusiasts, this beloved attraction will continue to thrill guests.

buschgardens.com/williamsburg/roller-coasters/loch-ness-monster/



MAHUKA



Mahuka

Walibi Rhône-Alpes, France
Intamin

Walibi Rhône-Alpes debuted Mahuka—one of the first single-rail coasters in Europe—on June 15. Thanks to its immersive storytelling, Mahuka brings guests along for an exotic Pacific island journey where archaeologists uncover a forgotten tiki god's temple. As the deity awakens, riders must escape the impending wrath.

Mahuka, which means “escape” in Hawaiian, launches riders twice, reaching speeds up to 67 kph over 600 meters of track. The dynamic ride boasts 15 elements—including three inversions, 13 airtime moments, and a double top hat—serving as both a signature element and unique entry plaza for the ride.

Aiming to design a modest-sized coaster that rivals much larger rides, Walibi constructed Mahuka over 1.5 years with a budget of €10 million, devoting more than 12% of the ride's global budget to theming and landscaping. Ideal for families with young thrill-seekers, Mahuka transports guests on a 1.5-minute experience with custom-designed trains, soundtrack, and unique elements.

walibi.fr/en/explore-the-park/rides/thrills/mahuka

SEAWORLD



Penguin Trek

SeaWorld Orlando, Florida, United States
Bolliger & Mabillard

At SeaWorld Orlando, Penguin Trek redefines the family coaster experience with an exciting expedition through Antarctica. This innovative coaster—accommodating adventurers from 42 to 77 inches tall—features two powerful launches and speeds up to 43 mph along its 3,020-foot track. Riders board snowmobile-styled cars and traverse both indoor and outdoor environments, encountering twists, turns, and icy vistas.

What sets Penguin Trek apart is its finale: guests disembark into SeaWorld's penguin habitat, transitioning seamlessly from thrill ride to an immersive wildlife encounter.

“Penguin Trek embodies the spirit of adventure and exploration, offering an immersive journey through the wonders of Antarctica while connecting our mission to animal care,” says Jon Peterson, president of SeaWorld Orlando.

This new attraction, part of the park's Antarctica realm, includes air-conditioned queues and an engaging narrative that highlights SeaWorld's commitment to conservation. Opened on July 7, Penguin Trek first debuted to the park's platinum, gold, silver, and Fun Card passholders, creating extra value for those who invested in an annual pass.

<https://seaworld.com/orlando/roller-coasters/penguin-trek/>



Phoenix Rising

Busch Gardens Tampa Bay, Tampa, Florida, United States
Bolliger & Mabillard

Phoenix Rising began soaring over Busch Gardens Tampa Bay in July. Designed for families, the new suspended coaster from Bolliger & Mabillard (B&M) stands 80-feet-tall, travels at 44 mph, and features a 42-inch rider height requirement.

“This fills a niche within our attractions roster that was missing,” says Nick Pelisek, manager of creative development of Phoenix Rising’s shorter height requirement. The park worked with B&M to safely develop a ride younger children can experience. “We found a good, sweet spot: we delivered an attraction that the whole family can enjoy that has a mix of thrills—and a couple of elements people have not seen before.”

That includes the novelty of onboard audio that changes per ride, depending on which mythical creature guests encounter on the digital displays inside the loading station.

“Giving them a family ride is what everyone was fully asking for. Our goal is to satisfy passholders and our guests,” says Erick Elliott, vice president, engineering and general services at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay.

—Scott Fais

buschgardens.com/tampa/roller-coasters/phoenix-rising



Snoopy's Soap Box Racers

Kings Island, Mason, Ohio, United States
Vekoma

Kings Island’s newest addition—Snoopy’s Soap Box Racers—showcases the park’s first family boomerang coaster experience in the heart of the new Camp Snoopy. Designed by Vekoma, the coaster propels riders both forward and backward along the same 672-foot track, reaching speeds up to 36 mph on this 68-second “race.” Accommodating 20 riders per train, the coaster brings the thrill of a classic soap box derby to life, promising to delight families with young and young-at-heart thrill seekers (minimum 38-inch tall accompanied).

Themed around the beloved Peanuts characters, Snoopy’s Soap Box Racers initially hoists riders up a 70-foot hill. As Snoopy waves the green flag, the coaster launches into exhilarating twists and turns, passing a camp lookout station and racing toward the finish line. Just when riders think they’ve reached the end, the coaster reverses, sending them through the course again, backward.

visitkingsisland.com/rides-experiences/snoopys-soap-box-racers



ZAMPERLA



ThunderVolt

Playland at the Pacific National Exhibition, Vancouver, Canada
Zamperla

Playland's ThunderVolt delivers an electrifying launch experience as one of Canada's fastest launch coasters, adding a new thrill to Vancouver's beloved amusement park. This Zamperla-reimagined coaster catapults riders into an exhilarating high-speed adventure, hitting full throttle within seconds.

With its 380-meter track and a maximum height of 18 meters, ThunderVolt offers a unique mix of cutting-edge technology and sheer excitement geared towards riders who are at least 132 centimeters tall. The launch sequence features a dynamic LED-lit tunnel that propels guests into a thrilling airtime hill, followed by a massive figure-eight helix that guarantees an adrenaline rush.

"ThunderVolt uses our new Lightning trains, and they represent the next generation of roller coaster design," says Antonio Zamperla, CEO of Zamperla Group. "They are light, have a low maintenance cost, and are extremely comfortable," he says, noting the decade of research behind the coaster train's creation.

Located next to the historic Playland Wooden Coaster, ThunderVolt marks a significant investment in the park's future, perfectly complementing Playland's classic attractions.

pne.ca/rides/thundervolt/

EUROPA-PARK



Voltron Nevera

Europa-Park, Rust, Germany
Mack Rides

Europa-Park's groundbreaking multi-launch coaster—Voltron Nevera powered by Rimac—takes riders on a 1,385-meter journey with Mediterranean flair. This Mack Rides marvel—an adrenaline junkie's dream—features four mind-boggling launches up to 100 kilometers per hour, including a 105-degree backward blast, and an insane 105-degree vertical ascent. With seven inversions and 2.2 seconds of weightlessness, the new ride's goal was to defy gravity—and guest expectations.

Tucked within the park's new Croatian-themed area, Voltron speeds amid ruins and ancient olive trees, with the coaster's narrative revolving around Nikola Tesla's pioneering spirit and electrifying inventions. The coaster's sleek design and towering Voltron structures—as visually striking as the ride itself—sets the bar high for thrill rides.

europapark.de/en/theme-park/attractions/voltron-nevera-powered-rimac



Ride Voltron Nevera

Go for a spin on the new coaster at IAAPA Honors, a celebration of the excellence, talent, and ingenuity thriving within the global attractions industry, April 28-30, 2025, at Europa-Park in Rust, Germany. Learn more at IAAPA.org/Honors2025



INTAMIN



Amazonia

Bellewaerde Park, Vpres, Belgium
Intamin

Amazonia riders board an eight-person spinning raft, navigate curves, experience downward turns, and slide down a thrilling halfpipe—all before entering a dark mine shaft. Suddenly, the floor disappears and the entire raft plunges straight down, dropping five meters into the mines, before bouncing back and falling again like a yo-yo. Experiencing a bungee drop on a rapids ride provides a uniquely exciting experience for riders.

“Amazonia represents the pinnacle of Intamin’s decades-long accumulation of knowledge and technological advancements,” says Intamin Chief Commercial Officer Lukas Spieldiener, who credits Bellewaerde for being “willing to push the boundaries of traditional rapids rides.”

The six-minute, 540-meter ride also features a high-speed inclined lift that is three times faster than normal and a space-saving, rotating vertical lift that offers riders a panoramic view while ascending to an 18-meter-high aerial steel channel.

bellewaerde.be/park/fr/le-parc/attractions/amazonia

MARGARITAVILLE AT LANIER ISLANDS



Apocalypse

Fins Up Water Park, Margaritaville at Lanier Islands, Buford, Georgia, United States
WhiteWater

As one of Georgia’s first water coasters, Apocalypse is a cross between a WhiteWater Master Blaster and a Boomerango. Starting from a height of more than 50 feet, guests in one- or two-person inner tubes plunge three stories before they are propelled upwards into a dark tube. The flume opens to provide riders a glimpse of another frightening drop and an equally intimidating Boomerango wall. Three additional WhiteWater inner tube rides also opened on the same slide tower as Apocalypse, including Serpentine Storm, a Tailspin-Constrictor-Rattler fusion with bursts of AquaLucent colors inside two dark tubes.

margaritavilleresorts.com/margaritaville-at-lanier-islands/whats-new-in-2024



AQUAVILLAGE FOLLONICA



Apo the Ring Slide

Acqua Village, Follonica, Italy
Polin

The liquid journey on this 18-meter high, 145-meter long Polin Rift Slide is notable for its theming and start—an enclosed ride on single or two-seater dinghies. Inspired by the Hawaiian Islands, two five-meter-tall tiki warriors with spears and menacing shields guard its entry. The photogenic highlight of the ride is a 12-meter diameter golden loop that provides riders with a final ascent and descent, before dropping into a narrow pool at the end.

“The Rift Slide in Acquavillage Follonica is an engineering marvel,” exclaims Polin Waterparks Brand Ambassador Şöhret Pakiş. “It is a testament to our commitment to pushing the boundaries of water park entertainment.” Pakiş adds that ensuring safety and excitement on this novel ride “required innovative design and meticulous attention to detail.”

acquavillage.it/en/apo-the-ring-slide/

AQUASCOPE



Aquascope Water Park

Futuroscope Xperiences, Chasseneuil-du-Poitou, France
Polin

Polin contributed to a cutting-edge indoor water park that leverages digital technologies to create an unforgettable experience. This 6,000-square-meter, €60 million attraction in western France features Europe’s first aquatic cinema, where swimmers are surrounded by a 270-degree screen.

Visual effects, video mapping, and other technologies immerse guests in virtual aquatic worlds that are in constant evolution—on the lazy river, swimming in an underwater cave where mysterious events unfold, or in an area with submerged beaches. One moment, guests are enjoying an infinite sea and starry sky; the next, shooting stars appear and the water around them begins to vibrate as a story unfolds.

Futuroscope’s latest addition features eight slides, including a massive spiral that starts 18 meters above the ground. Several rides, including the Family Space Boat and Family Space Shuttle combo, have a glossy finish with natural color transitions and artistic designs that are resistant to pool chemicals and ultraviolet light thanks to a vacuum-assisted resin transfer molding named Utexture.

“Our goal was to create a water park that not only entertains but also inspires awe and excitement,” says Polin’s Şöhret Pakiş.

futurescope.com/en/resort/aquascope



Bow Wow Blaster

Schlitterbahn, New Braunfels, Texas, United States
WhiteWater

WhiteWater redesigned one of its classic rides, the Master Blaster, and scaled it down for parents with young children. This 271-foot long, two-person tube ride, with speeds of up to 14 mph, is suitable for anyone 36 inches or taller.

“The mini blaster allows small children to experience new sensations without being intimidated. The accelerations are less abrupt compared to the adult version,” explains WhiteWater Global Head of Sales Doug Smith, who adds that the ride is also “designed so that they can easily ride over and over again.”

The Bow Wow Blaster is part of Schatze’s Storybrook Park, a recently opened addition to Schlitterbahn New Braunfels, a Six Flags-owned resort located half an hour from San Antonio. Themed after the water park’s lovable pup, this children’s area includes three mini lands with six new slides, as well as a 1,200-gallon tipping bucket and more than 70 interactive water features. This addition “does a great job of maximizing an existing footprint to provide the most fun for families with young children,” Smith adds.

schlitterbahn.com/new-braunfels/rides-experiences/bow-wow-blaster



Catapult Falls

SeaWorld San Antonio, Texas, United States
Intamin

With a spring break opening, Catapult Falls at SeaWorld San Antonio began soaking riders early in 2024. What starts as a leisurely boat ride becomes a thrill when a vertical lift elevates rafts upwards five stories. Guests enjoy views of the park before dropping at a 53-degree angle.

The Intamin flume coaster uses a series of high-speed belts that work in unison to propel boats through straightaway channels at speeds of up to 20 mph. (Part of the yellow belt system can be seen under the vehicle in the photo to the left). The burst of speed sends riders into airtime hills and splashdowns.

“This ride incorporates our latest, state-of-the-art flume ride technology and design, which we have been continuously refining over the past years,” says Intamin Chief Commercial Officer Lukas Spieldiener.

“It was an instant hit and quickly became a favorite with pass members and first-time guests,” says SeaWorld San Antonio Public Relations Manager Chuck Cureau.

seaworld.com/san-antonio/rides/catapult-falls/



PROSLIDE



Eagle Hunt

Silverwood Boulder Beach, Athol, Idaho
ProSlide

Boulder Beach's 4-acre expansion features a dual-lane Rocket Blast water coaster named Eagle Hunt and a colorful children's play complex, meant to evoke the colors of northern Idaho's fish, with eight rides facing the same direction. Eagle Hunt features several unique twists, including an interactive element at the top of the ride, where guests pick their "prey" on a screen, then try to reach the bottom of the slide before it escapes. Along the way, racers pass one another in opposing directions, from their respective 925-foot lanes, getting a quick glimpse of the other before blasting uphill to a Flying Saucer and race to the finish line.

silverwoodthemepark.com/rides/eagle-hunt.php

EL DORADO PARK



El Dorado Park

Punta Cana, Dominican Republic
ProSlide

Opened in May, El Dorado Park is one of the largest water parks in the Caribbean, with a capacity of up to 3,500 people and more than 20 attractions, including snorkeling, a wave pool, a lazy river, and a mix of ProSlide rides.

The rides—which include a Tornado 60, Behemoth Bowl 60, a Kidz Zone and three Pipelines that begin atop a beautiful rocky escarpment—were designed to complement the Dominican Republic's lush greenery and blue skies while offering unique thrills.

The six-lane Pro Racer provides a high-performance twist on the classic racing adventure. The new slide is designed with ergonomic start-tubs and footholds, so riders begin the race standing with their mats before launching themselves down the high-speed, multi-lane bump course.

eldoradowaterpark.com



Kaleidoscope Kavern Lazy River

Wilderness at the Smokies, Sevierville, Tennessee, United States
ADG and Moment Factory

The Kaleidoscope Kavern Lazy River features a tunnel where riders are immersed in a multimedia universe with projections transforming their bodies into living canvases.

As guests float down the river, they enter a unique tunnel filled with dreamlike projections, dynamic lighting, and nature sounds inspired by the Great Smoky Mountains' scenic beauty. There are nine chapters, including dancing fireflies, a starlit Tennessee night sky, changing seasons, and a surreal sequence where water and sky collide. Spatialized audio provides guests with a cinematic experience.

"The Kaleidoscope Kavern is a one-of-a-kind adventure river, designed specifically for this resort, that transforms a simple float into a mesmerizing journey," says Jim Dunn, president of ADG—Aquatic Development Group, which designed the attraction in collaboration with the multimedia studio Moment Factory.

Before constructing the Kaleidoscope Kavern, technicians built a one-tenth scale model with mirrors, water, projectors, lighting, and audio tracks. The new attraction is a highlight of Wilderness at the Smokies' 40,000-square-foot expansion.

wildernessatthesmokies.com/blog/more-on-our-new-lazy-river



Mega Mayhem

Rapids Water Park, Riviera Beach, Florida, United States
ProSlide

Unique jet propulsion technology propels riders, seated in two-person boats, uphill and around curves, creating a roller coaster-like experience on water. Mega Mayhem is the largest water coaster in Rapids Water Park's 45-year history.

The coaster includes four saucer bowls that offer expansive views around turns and three blast zones that use uphill water propulsion technology that can handle 50% more payload capacity. The design also reduces water and energy usage by 30%.

"Mega Mayhem, a ProSlide Dueling Rocket Blast water coaster, was expertly designed and engineered to replace Rapids Water Park's first water slides, which were installed back in 1979. "Rapids is one of the USA's preeminent water parks, and ProSlide is very proud to continue our strong 25-plus-year partnership in creating world-class guest experiences together," says ProSlide Vice President for Business Development and Strategic Accounts Phil Hayles.

At 873-feet-long, guests race at speeds of up to 22 mph in two side-by-side lanes, where they periodically see and hear their opponents across low-separator walls, enhancing the competitive thrill.

rapidswaterpark.com/attractions/mega-mayhem/



WIEGAND WATERRIDES



Monster Lotus

Parque Aquático, Amarante, Portugal
Wiegand

The 135-meter Monster Lotus is Wiegand Waterrides' first compact rafting Lotus waterslide on land. Riders on a two- to four-person raft enjoy "high speeds, deep jumps and weightless moments," according to the ride manufacturer, which also provided Parque Aquático with a 15-meter-high, 44-meter-long free fall slide named Vertigem to help mark the park's 30th anniversary. A pair of giant eyes, teeth and scratch marks contribute to the ride's "monster" theming.

parqueaquaticoamarante.com/en/monster-lotus-2/

OCT HAPPY VALLEY BEIJING



Playa Maya Water Park

OCT Happy Valley Beijing, China
ProSlide

The Playa Maya water park at Happy Valley Beijing expanded this year to offer six new water ride complexes, designed and manufactured by ProSlide. There's something for guests of all ages and thrill levels. Adrenaline fans can take a near-vertical plunge in the FreeFall with SkyBox, while families with young children will enjoy the RideHouse 600 interactive water play area. There is also a MammothBlast Water Coaster with FlyingSaucer 45, a TurboTwister, ProRacer, Tornado 60, and TornadoWave 60 complex.

"The expansion of Playa Maya at OCT Happy Valley Beijing exemplifies our commitment to delivering world-class water attractions that resonate with park-goers," says ProSlide Chief Operating Officer for Asia Chuanchao Cheng. "Our ongoing collaboration with OCT Group allows us to continually innovate and provide thrilling, memorable experiences for visitors."

bj.playamaya.cn/



Sam Son Water Park

Thanh Hoa, Vietnam

ProSlide

With an investment of nearly 6,000 billion Vietnamese dong and set over 33 hectares, the Sun Group's Sam Son water park is the largest outdoor entertainment complex in North Central Vietnam.

Impressive theming, inspired by nature and Vietnamese folk tales, sets the park apart. Custom graphics evoking the fire spot stingray, for example, are embedded within the fiberglass of the ProSlide Double TornadoWave 60, while artists hand-painted three bright orange and yellow FlyingSaucer 45s.

The FlyingSaucers feature patented high-speed technology, inspired by the speed and motion of a giant slalom ski turn. Each boat drops and dives into the FlyingSaucer, accelerating into a high-speed turn like a world-class ski racer.

"Our collaboration with Sun Group on Sam Son Water Park is something we are incredibly proud of. Together we are pushing the boundaries of aquatic entertainment," says ProSlide Vice President for Business Development Steve Avery. "This partnership is true to our core. We are delivering unforgettable experiences with only the highest-quality rides."

Visitors to the Sam Son Water Park are also enjoying the park's RideHouse 600 Pro, BehemothBowl 60, a 550-meter lazy river, and a 6,100-square-meter wave pool that has an artificial coastline of nearly 180 meters. Government officials expect the water park to help Sam Son attract 10 million visitors a year.

sunworld.vn/en/sam-son



Serengeti Springs

Hattiesburg Zoo Hattiesburg, Mississippi, United States

WhiteWater

Faced with a hot summer and humidity regularly topping 90%, Mississippians have warmly welcomed the new 3.5-acre Serengeti Springs water park, located in the Africa section of the Hattiesburg Zoo.

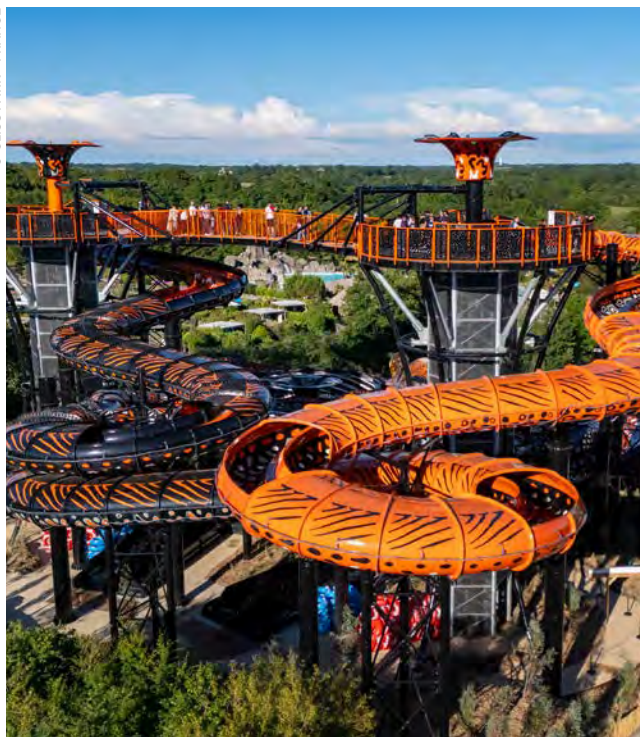
A WhiteWater FusionFortress 10 called TreeTop Trek—themed with giraffes, a grazing zebra, a mid-flight parrot and other animals—is the centerpiece of the first phase of the park. This giant interactive aquatic play structure has nine slides, 280 features and is topped by two tipping buckets, one at 3,000 liters and the other at 1,800 liters. It is surrounded by lounge chairs, cabanas and nearly 18,000 square feet of brightly colored Life Floor slip-resistant Ripple 2.0 foam rubber tiles, specified by Martin Aquatic.

The park also features pool sider water slides, AquaSplash toys, a Champagne Bowl, AquaTubes, a three-lane mat racer and mini mat racers for young children. A 450-foot lazy river connects to a swim-up bar for socializing and refreshments.

hattiesburgzoo.com/serengeti



O'GLISS PARK - FRANCE



Stingray

O'Gliss Park, Le Bernard, Vendée, France
Polin

France's O'Gliss Park has launched a massive, new Polin slide named Stingray. Rising to a height of 26 meters with four slides, the ride can accommodate up to 1,000 people per hour.

"This is a world exclusive for O'Gliss; we have exclusivity for several years," explains O'Gliss Park Operations Manager Clément Trigatti, who adds that the €5 million ride is O'Gliss' biggest investment since opening in 2016.

Each of Stingray's four slides is designed for two-person floats. Thrill-seekers can reach speeds of up to 50 kph. A bridge links the two start towers, while the four interweaving paths conclude in two gigantic bowls.

The Stingray "will plunge our visitors into an aquatic adventure that's sure to leave a lasting impression," adds O'Gliss Park CEO Michaël Thibaud. "Whichever of the four routes they take, our visitors are immersed in an exciting experience as they whirl around on the wings of the stingray thanks to centrifugal force."

oglisspark.fr/en/the-attractions/stingray

MT. OLYMPUS WATER & THEME PARK



The Rise of Icarus

Mt. Olympus Water & Theme Park
Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin, United States
WhiteWater

Soaring 160 feet into the air, The Rise of Icarus features five water slides including The Fall, one of North America's tallest, and arguably scariest, water rides with a launch point 145-feet-high. Guests must climb 14 stories before pushing off into the darkness of a WhiteWater High Speed AquaTube. They then circle the tower four times, at speeds of up to 30 mph, before finishing in a long run-out lane.

"Riders can't get enough; they're rushing back up the tower to experience all five body slides. Each slide is fast and exhilarating—definitely worth the wait and anticipation!" exclaims the park's Marketing Director Fofo Backhaus.

Four other rides—a Freefall with a terrifying plummet, two tubes with intense turns, and another tube for visitors who have had enough adrenaline rushes for one day—launch from a platform that is 57-feet-high.

The Icarus tower, which pays homage to the Greek mythological figure who soared too close to the sun, is a collaboration among the architecture firm Ramaker, WhiteWater and Mt. Olympus Water and Theme Park.

mtolympuspark.com/specials/the-rise-of-icarus



Tirol Log Flume and Alpine Express 'Enzian'

Europa-Park, Rust, Baden-Württemberg, Germany
Mack Rides

Europa-Park has relaunched two classic, Austrian-themed rides following a fire in 2023: the Tirol Log Flume and Alpine Express Enzian roller coaster that are intertwined together. First inaugurated more than 40 years ago, these two classics from Mack Rides have delighted Europa-Park guests for generations.

"I grew up with the Alpine Express 'Enzian' and the Tirol Log Flume and have many wonderful memories with my family and friends," says Europa-Park partner Ann-Kathrin Mack, who notes that the project was completed "in record time" following the fire with the park "never losing sight of the attention to detail that is so important to Europa-Park."

The rebuilt log flume's 4.5-minute journey begins with a steep ascent, then rapidly descends into a Magical Valley of Diamonds with majestic rock formations and thundering waterfalls. The family-friendly Alpine Express is a two-lap ride that reaches speeds of up to 45 kph and is billed as a great introduction to roller coasters for children as young as 4 years old. **FW**

europapark.de/en/theme-park/attractions/tirol-log-flume

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EFTELING



LEFT: Efteling's latest sustainable initiative include transforming vintage locomotives to electric without altering their classic appearance.

BELOW: In 2022, Efteling CEO Fons Jurgens made a commitment to future park development being sustainable.

Full Steam Ahead

Efteling reaches new milestones in its sustainability journey

by Juliana Gilling

IMAGINE A STEAM TRAIN that doesn't depend on a roaring coal fire to generate the steam driving its wheels. Efteling, the enchanting theme park resort in the Netherlands, is turning that idea into a reality by converting its popular steam trains to run on battery-electric technologies.

Efteling aims to be climate-neutral by 2030 and climate-positive by 2032, therefore transitioning the railroad to a more sustainable power source.

"Since the arrival of our first steam locomotive, Aagje, 55 years ago, our trains have been running on coal. To achieve the ambitious goals we have set for ourselves, we must ensure the trains that transport passengers around the Efteling theme park will be electrically powered," says Efteling CEO Fons Jurgens.

Efteling will gradually electrify its three current steam locomotives: Aagje (built in 1911), Moortje (1907), and Trijntje (1991). The trains will look the same, only the propulsion will change. The modified stock will feature steam train sound effects to evoke the experience of a classic ride.

Alan Keef Ltd, which originally supplied Trijntje, is working on Aagje first. The family-owned business—an authority on narrow gauge railways—is based in Herefordshire, United Kingdom. Efteling is committed to preserving its heritage, so it plans to store the parts removed from the steam trains in the Efteling Archive.

Guests will see the first electrically powered steam trains in operation during the upcoming holiday event, Winter Efteling. "It is a small step in the grand scheme of activities, but it will be very visible to our guests who love the nostalgic train trips through the park," Jurgens says.



Sustainable Energy Sources

This project is part of Efteling's broader drive toward sustainability. According to Jurgens, "accessibility, sustainability, and health" are logical starting points in all updated business plans.

For example, the darkly thrilling Danse Macabre ride, slated to open at Efteling on Oct. 31, and the new Efteling Grand Hotel will not use any fossil fuels.

"On the hotel roof, we will install 120 extra solar panels," Jurgens adds.

The park will connect the Efteling Grand Hotel and Danse Macabre to Efteling's sustainable energy system, named Anderrijk.

This system allows Efteling to heat and cool buildings in the Anderrijk area of the park using heat-cold storage instead of natural gas. The system also serves facilities that include the Efteling Theatre, the Fata Morgana ride, the Fabula 4D theater attraction, and the Frau Boltes Küche restaurant.

Sustainable energy storage will provide heat for the colder months. The heat that Danse Macabre produces during its operation, for example, will warm the attraction in winter. The park's Aquanura water show is also connected to Anderrijk—"an innovative scientific project in the field of aquathermy," Jurgens says.

Efteling has also switched to gas-free cooking in its restaurants, including Station de Oost and the Bäckerei Krümel bakery.

Efteling's sustainable energy system has cut current gas consumption by 350,000 cubic meters annually. The park also expects to see reduced nitrogen deposition.

Just like households, Efteling's electricity consumption peaks in the evening. The park cannot always meet this demand with the energy it generates from solar panels,



Tour Efteling

Gain insight on Efteling's commitment to sustainable expansion, safety measures, guest satisfaction, and the integration of innovative technologies during an EDUTour at IAAPA Expo Europe on Monday, Sept. 23. Learn more at IAAPA.org/Efteling

especially in autumn and winter. So, in spring 2024, Efteling invested €3 million in batteries for energy storage and energy management. “The theme park will become more self-sufficient and less dependent thanks to the new batteries,” Jurgens says.

The batteries make it easier to maintain stability between supply and demand. The Efteling Smartgrid regulates and automates energy flows to ensure the most efficient use.

“By saving energy, generating energy (Efteling’s solar panel count hit more than 25,500 in September 2023), and reducing gas consumption, we are laying a solid foundation for our sustainability goals,” Jurgens says.

The park is taking a step-by-step approach that makes sense for their business plan.

“Our challenge is in the subjects where we do not have complete control over everything, such as waste and transport,” he says. “Ultimately, we want to eliminate residual waste, but visitors also like to bring their own food and drinks, and that can cause additional waste streams. We think carefully about how best to deal with this.”

Greener Travel

Visitor travel is another focus. “Mobility is a big challenge for our industry,” Jurgens says. The park aims to reduce CO2 emissions by encouraging people to use sustainable travel options rather than arriving by car. Efteling has struck agreements with rail and bus providers (including Arriva and Flixbus) to make it easy for potential guests to reach the theme park resort on public transport from anywhere in the Netherlands and Belgium.

Electric car charging stations are also available. “In 2021, we became the largest charging station in the Benelux with 87 charging points for 174 cars,” Jurgens says.

In addition, the park provides free bicycle parking. Efteling wants to cut CO2 emissions by 20% per employee. To motivate employees to cycle to work, the park offers interest-free loans when purchasing electric bicycles.

“We are adding more electric cars and devices to our fleet for use in park operations, such as electric trucks and lease cars. We also use electric leaf blowers and an electric outboard motor for the motorboat at our Gondoletta boat ride,” Jurgens explains.

Empowering All Stakeholders

He believes all staff must be involved in Efteling’s sustainability journey. “We run internal sustainability campaigns to create and refresh awareness. We believe everyone can contribute to their own work. Every little bit helps.” Efteling also engages with suppliers on sustainability. “We think it is important for the whole chain to become more sustainable. It’s a long haul, but we will persevere for a sustainable future.”

The park encourages visitors to do their part. Efteling’s chatty paper gobbler, named Holle Bolle Gijs, has long invited visitors to feed him paper scraps, making recycling fun. The park helps to support the charitable organization Villa Pardoes by collecting cans and PET bottles. Efteling shares its sustainability efforts with the public through its website, social media channels,



EFTELING

and engagement with the media and international forums.

Efteling sees the well-being of its community and environment as integral to the business. “The largest part of our profit is reinvested in the company to ensure Efteling remains independent and charts its own course,” Jurgens says. “We are committed to passing on Efteling in an even more beautiful state than it already is.” **EW**

efteling.com

In keeping with Efteling’s sustainability practices, the Gondoletta boats now utilize electric motors.



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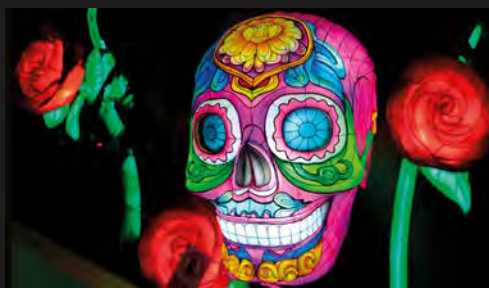
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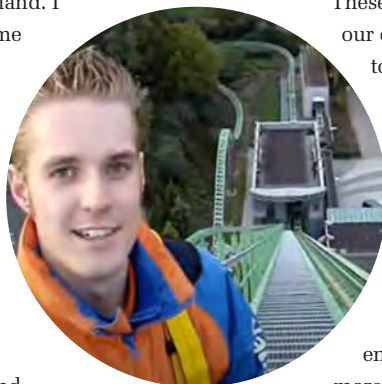


Flying Toward the Attractions Industry



WHEN I WAS YOUNG, I wanted to be a pilot, and I still think air travel is something special. When I was 17, I applied for the KLM Flight Academy. The interview went well, but they thought I was too young. I had to wait four years to re-apply. At the time, I was working as a ride attendant at Six Flags Holland. I was always obsessed with theme parks and roller coasters, but I never thought about transforming that love into a long-term career.

I remained in the attractions industry after my time at Six Flags Holland. As I grew into different roles in this industry, I could proudly say I never succeeded alone. There was always a friend from another park, a colleague far away, or a mentor available when I needed one. Of course, you learn a lot from the organization you work with. But why stop there if there is a whole world to explore?



Looking back at my last two and a half years with IAAPA, there have been so many opportunities for connection with—and between—members. This ranges from smaller, more one-on-one meetings (like our mentor-mentee program) to our Middle East Trade Summit, where we hosted more than 1,000 members in Riyadh and Abu Dhabi, creating trade opportunities and a robust education program.

These connections are the reason we offer our events to IAAPA members. We want to bring the industry together to learn from each other, network, and gain new insights. We are currently working on new events and formats, including the IAAPA and AAVEA Africa Summit 2024, IAAPA Indoor Entertainment Summit in December 2024, and IAAPA Water Park Forum in early 2025. These new events will ensure that peer-to-peer learning is even more valuable for our members.

Lastly, the highlight of the year is IAAPA Expo Europe. As a Dutchman, I am proud to invite IAAPA members to come and join us for the leisure industry's premier event in Europe from Sept. 23 to 27 in Amsterdam! We have an extensive education program and tailored events waiting for you. **FW**

“As I grew into different roles in this industry, I could proudly say I never succeeded alone.”

Peter van der Schans is the executive director & vice president of IAAPA EMEA. Connect with him on **LinkedIn**:



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